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By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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THE CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE OF MODERN CHURCHMEN

BY THE EDITOR

THE Thirty-ninth Annual Conference of Modern Churchmen was held in Girton College, Cambridge, on July 23rd-27th, 1956. The theme of the Conference was 'Present Trends in English Religion', and the speakers and their subjects alike admirably illustrated the diversity of the Church of England. That these diversities not only exist under one roof, but can and do *live together* under one roof, is the peculiar glory of our Church, and indeed an essential aspect of its national and historic character. It was this, and the danger of rigidly authoritarian interpretations, whether of doctrine, or of the Bible, or of the ordering of the institutions of the Church, which came out again and again in the lectures and discussions, and will be clearly seen by a perusal of the papers published in this issue of the *Modern Churchman*. In addition to the published programme, there was a discussion of the deleterious effects on the life of the Church which will result from the legalisation and imposition of the proposed revised Canons, and it is hoped to deal more fully with this aspect in an article in the next number of this journal.

The thanks of the Conference are due to our distinguished lecturers; to the Rev. A. W. Adams, Dean of Divinity of Magdalen College, the Chairman of the Conference and of the Committee which made the arrangements for it; to the ladies of the Committee and its Hon. Treasurer and Secretary, Miss Irene Walker, F.R. Hist.S.; to the Rev. W. T. A. Philpot, Chaplain of the Conference, for his care and reverent oversight of the services in the College Chapel.

"THE FUNDAMENTALIST HERESY"

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

By Sir Henry Self, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., K.B.E., B.D., M.Sc., Ph.D.

THE opening address to this conference should not anticipate the development of its basic theme, viz. 'The Present Trends in English Religion', which will be presented in the sequence of papers by eminent authorities in the relative fields. My purpose is to provide a curtain raiser, serving to indicate the more critical aspects of the modern situation, and I have been invited to address myself to what is well described as 'The Fundamentalist Heresy'.

We shall await with great interest the assessments made of the present trends in English religion as such, but I cannot resist glancing at the broad international situation in which we find ourselves. As an introduction I would mention a letter which I received a little while back from one of our friends in South Africa, who gently took me to task for a statement I had made to the effect that 'everyone looks to this country as the spiritual home of the world'. He suggested that this overlooked the religious history of the East, whilst for the West itself the statement did not ring true under present conditions. Without discussing the merits of nationalism, he points out that under the stress of nationalistic feeling there is always a parallel dislike of the institutions and outlook of those peoples against whom the nationalistic feeling might be directed. This is one reason why the prestige of English thought and institutions is so much below the level that they have hitherto enjoyed, and as my friend points out, the centre of theological discourse has certainly passed to the Continent: this country is, relatively speaking, somewhat of a theological backwater. I have paraphrased his observations, but the general tenor seems to constitute a challenge which we cannot overlook.

I can only offer this conference the reaction of a reasonably informed layman who has endeavoured to understand the issues and is perhaps in a better position than the professional theologians to weigh the impact of their thought upon the ordinary world. I have gone around recently asking intelligent people whether they had heard of Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Berdyaev, Gabriel Marcel, Gilson, Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Husserl, Jaspers and others, but alas, I have drawn a blank on the lot practically every time. The only name that has registered has been Jean-Paul Sartre, and the fact that his name does register seems to indicate

that modern lay thinking has been aware of the negative assessments of life, but has been untouched by the new dogmatics advanced by the Continental theologians. The impact, for example, of Karl Barth on the public mind in this country (at least before his visit this month) has been surprisingly small, as contrasted with the far-reaching implications behind his teaching. On the other hand, the simple approach of an evangelical fundamentalist like that of Dr. Billy Graham has obviously had a very wide impact.

I suggest that first we try to get our perspective straight. Are we concerned with a rump or remnant of the elect, upon whom religious thought and practice should be concentrated, without regard to the really critical position in which humanity in general finds itself? Assuming we reject the first alternative, my immediate criticism of the present trend in English religion is that it seems to be so uncertain of itself that some sections are trying to recover lost prestige under the umbrella of sensational evangelism, whilst others are grasping at shadows in the form of Continental religious dogmatics rather than facing up to their responsibilities to re-find the English tradition in an age which demands direct spiritual insight, first and foremost. Never was there a situation more acute for the average man, exposing wide his need of help and guidance to an understanding of the meaning of life, but he gets very little help from anybody except the fundamentalists. The only refuges that seem open to him are the authoritarian arms either of the Roman Church or those of the Protestant schools of which Barth and Brunner are typical, or those of evangelical fundamentalism. In the first and third he is not expected to understand — a consideration, at least, for which he should be duly grateful. But in the second he has no such escape hatch, because it is a development within the Protestant Church, and if the Reformation means anything it means that each man must be the Adam of his own soul.

My difficulty in tackling this theme is perhaps typified by a conversation with an intelligent layman. I said to him, by way of opening gambit, ' I fear that English religion has matched itself to the economic situation of the country, in that our exports are out of balance with our imports.' This my friend immediately challenged, but he could only address his challenge to the fact that the English way of life is a superb export which more than balances the account. This we all readily agree, but it seems to me that he was not talking about religion as such, but about the traditional background and outlook of the English nation which is surviving in its strength despite the absence of a lead from its spiritual advisers. I think we really have to get it clear that in speaking

of religion we are not dealing with ethical codes or conventional standards.

During the last eleven years the nation has been progressively recovering from the apathy following World War II, and there are increasing signs of a general spiritual revival at hand. This, however, is seriously damped down by three factors:

(1) the confusion among the Churches themselves as to their message for the modern age;
(2) the impact of the scientific revolution and the intensity of technological development; and
(3) the irresponsibility of much of modern thinking.

I should say a word on (2) and (3), having already mentioned (1). On (2) I would recall the strong emphasis I placed on this aspect in last year's Presidential Address. Perhaps it is unnecessary to say more here than to indicate the difficulty of a clear-thinking scientific individual when he is confronted solely with fundamentalistic or authoritarian teaching on a take it or leave it basis, and this difficulty is increased by factor (3). We have a very marked tendency in some academic circles and even in broadcast debates to cast all tradition to the winds without putting anything in its place. Indeed, nothing can be put in its place because those who are so keen on reducing man to a behaviouristic phenomenon would naturally not expect to find any purpose or meaning within his behaviour.

The outcome of all this must be, as is evident on all sides, that either the individual religious urge is stifled under the pressure of scientific reasoning, or else the scientific reasoning itself is suppressed in deference to blind acceptance of authoritarian belief. Thus, in spite of the fact that the fundamentalist churches show definite signs of activity and enterprise, there is a decline in English religious life as a whole. In default of a valid modern interpretation of the Christian philosophy, the thinking layman is being driven to choose between fundamentalism, authoritarianism and agnosticism.

Taking the most outstanding example of fundamentalism with its development of mass appeal, we have witnessed two Billy Graham crusades. Those who are concerned for the future of enduring religion in this country must be seriously perturbed by the course of events. The personal charm of Dr. Graham and his sincerity are beyond question, but his appeal was ultimately to fundamentalistic acceptance of the Bible and a form of Christian doctrine which has long been outgrown. By his success the prospects of getting a thinking religion accepted which could meet the

developing needs of a spiritual humanity have been set back seriously in deference to an emotionalist appeal having purely ephemeral results, however seemingly successful at the time. Lest this argument should be thought to be unfair, I venture to recall to you the judgment of the present Archbishop of York as reported in the Church of England newspaper on February 10th last.

> 'Under the heading, "The Menace of Fundamentalism", Dr. Ramsey includes a severe criticism of evangelistic methods practised by Mr. Billy Graham, adding however that fundamentalism was becoming more conspicuous in religious circles in this country before ever the American preacher came here.
>
> The call to an immediate decision for Christ is, Dr. Ramsey thinks, a decision of the will and emotion in which the mind is not asked to participate. "This stifling of the mind in the process of decision" may "bring the most terrible revenges in scepticism and disillusionment." While recognizing that souls are won, and that it is right to preach for decision, the Bishop declares that "where the message is addressed to less than the whole man as a being with a mind, dishonour is done to the image in which man was created."
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> Calling Billy Graham "a man of utter humility and simplicity" the Bishop nevertheless accuses him of "teaching the grossest doctrines, and flinging his formula, 'The Bible says', over teaching which is emphatically not that of the Bible." Criticizing the fundamentalist doctrine of Atonement by penal substitution, Dr. Ramsey says that the theology of "Christ bore your punishment; believe and be saved," when accompanied by the fundamentalist's pulpit cliché, "The Bible says", is "a very distorted view of the apostolic gospel."
>
> The appeal of fundamentalism consists in "the authority and security it offers, quick and secure, to a generation restless and insecure. . . . Here is security — in a single night."
>
> The call is, "Hither young men, drown your worries in the rapture of conversion; stifle your doubts by abdicating the use of your mind. A rousing sermon, a hurricane of emotion, a will to leap in the dark — and peace at once and for ever."'

Passing from the particular question of the Graham movement and bye-passing the various forms of fundamentalist activity at a cruder level, one must refer to the current vogue of simple Biblicalist fundamentalism, as opposed to the dogmatic fundamentalism of Barthianism, which is discussed later. This, I am told, thrives even among undergraduates and may threaten to revive the outworn controversies which were so decisively fought by Dr. Major and this Union forty years ago. This issue links up with the current anti-historical approach prevalent in some quarters and and the historic scepticism of some of the younger New Testament theologians whose slogans seem to be the call to 'Biblical Theology' and the 'Unity of the Bible'

From this quarter, we must pass to that of Moral Rearmament. Here again we see an appeal to the fundamentalist attitude succeeding in producing ephemeral results and binding people into group life, but the very strength of the emotional appeal and the group ties seems increasingly to smother the personal responsibility of the individual. Speaking as a member of the Social and Industrial Council of the Church Assembly, I venture to call attention to the much discussed report on the Moral Rearmament movement which was prepared by that body in 1955. Nobody would dispute that the methods and principles of the movement have real value for backward areas and that it can justly claim great success overseas. Nevertheless, the methods and principles appropriate to the early stages of religious growth should not be those upon which the advanced development of English religion is to be based. The four absolutes preached by the movement are sound ethical principles, but they go in step with the emphasis on that waiting on guidance which is presumably intended to be the religious support. Yet, the English tradition has always emphasized individual responsibility and initiative and the need to think one's own problems through to considered judgment. Any student of psychology must be aware of the real dangers underlying such a movement unless it is grounded in personal religion which makes the individual realize his own responsibility for his destiny. In any event, it is not an unreasonable criticism of the movement that its world-wide activities tend to blur the religious background into a synthesis which suits all nations and all creeds.

Our review must pass on and have regard to the widespread tendency in ecclesiastical quarters to look back to Kierkegaard and the movements which have been developing over recent years as a consequence of the revival of his teaching. This has, one must almost say, 'degenerated' in its popular development into the negative thinking of Sartre which he has publicized through the novel. Sartre's works are well known and his conclusions have seriously affected the prospects of religious development. Time does not permit of any attempt to trace the development of so-called existentialism which seems, in its stricter forms, to have a religious appeal in ecclesiastical quarters in England to-day, judging by the Kierkegaard translations on sale: but it is important to recall that, at the other extreme, the movement has ended in Sartre's inference that values are subjective and that God does not exist. Sartre draws out the consequences of this 'death of God', with whom goes any prospect of values in an intelligible heaven. Thus, there is no other universe except the human universe, a universe of subjectivity having a pattern of values in dis-

tinction from the material world. With Sartre, there emerges a new humanism which man must pursue unaided through a cycle from nothingness to nothingness, realizing his being unto death, through anxiety without an object and the sense of guilt without reason.

This is one of the many strands of the modern situation which has thrown the layman into a choice between fundamentalism, authoritarianism and agnosticism. The difficulties of the laity are paralleled in ecclesiastical circles, where there seems to be increasing confusion following the failure of Anglo-Catholicism to provide an acceptable basis for Christian doctrine. In the general confusion of thought and outlook, there seems to be a readiness to grasp at any developments abroad which will relieve the embarrassment and give the hard-pressed clergy a chance to take a stand on authority without having to justify what they are actually putting forward as established Christian teaching Clearly here we have to turn to the Theology of Crisis, which also stems from Kierkegaard and has landed us with a considerable dose of Barthianism even in this country. It is indeed odd to read in the *Manchester Guardian* on the 10th May last that ' Barth rallied the Christian Church to a rediscovery of the Incarnation, to a sense of the incandescent wonder and power of " God made flesh ". He threw his weight against the " liberal " movement in the Church, and emphasized the difference between a man-made " Kingdom of God " and the reign of God as the Bible sees it.' Certainly he has done more to damage the liberal movement than anybody else in recent years, but it is much to be marvelled at that the clergy in this country should turn to this source for their inspiration if they really understand the basic themes that he and his earlier colleague, Dr. Emil Brunner, are trying to establish.

We should also notice the recent progress of the new movements within the Lutheran churches, with the significance that they can have for Christian outlook generally. But although it is probable that these movements, as well as Barthianism, have not secured as much public attention as many of their crusaders believe, that certainly would not be true of Reinhold Niebuhr. Here we have an example of a keen sociologist of radical views who has yet coupled his thought with a renewed emphasis on sin and the wrath of God[1] in a manner which must spell gloom for true religious development.

Serious reflection is called for on the basic significance of existentialism, and the new movements in Lutheranism, Calvinism

[1]c.f. R. Niebuhr, Gifford Lectures, First Series, pp. 24-25, and Second Series, p. 219.

and the Roman Church because of the serious repercussions that they are having upon the established religion in this country. It seems that there is throughout them all, except the last, a flight away from reason and an emphasis on irreason as the ultimate background of the universe. Such a theme must be seriously prejudicial to the prospects of religion itself, because it is ultimately to deny any meaning to the world and its history. Indeed at times some of the advocates of these conceptions seem almost to glory in the supposed depravity of man and nature, and to resign, without distress, the world and its occupants to oblivion.

By contrast, there is the note of ultra-emphasis on the conception of a 'hidden God' who is certainly not the God of the Christian Gospel. It is time that somebody spoke a few words on behalf of the common man and asked the theologians to address themselves to the primary task of explaining the meaning and purpose of the world in terms of Christian values rather than writing so much about the God whom they declare to be completely hidden yet exhaustively revealed. The welter of paradox in which they engage is only to be matched by the amazing liveliness with which they declare man's work to be of no value and tainted with sin. Why do they trouble to write their volumes if they know in advance that when finished they are just so much evidence of sinful pride on their own part? How can the ordinary man accept religion and remain a thinking person if he is told that he counts for nothing, that anything he may do must be sinful and that the world which he is striving to make a fit place for a spiritualized humanity is itself meaningless and an expression of a depraved Nature?

It will be quickly retorted that, to write thus, is simply to betray ignorance of the inner meaning of the new teaching. Such a retort is inadmissible. Religion must have a meaning for the ordinary man, and any teaching claiming dogmatic authority must at least be intelligibly expressed to the common mind. The Theology of Crisis must be judged by its intelligibility for the thinking layman, and that is almost nil. The present writer, despite many years of theological thought, finds the new dogmatics too mystifying in paradox and dialcetic to warrant further grappling with its esoteric significance. In any event, apart from its delight in irreason and denial of all value to human endeavour and experience, it must be obvious that a dogmatic authoritarianism claiming to reveal truth and salvation, is sadly astray if it denies validity to earnest Judaism and rejects the religious experience of the East with its ages of tradition and its own interpretation of life. At the same time, the claim overlooks the fact that the Christian Churches are split again and again, each section claiming on this thesis to be the exponent

of the supreme knowledge. Indeed, we witnessed the last split when Dr. Karl Barth and Dr. Emil Brunner parted company after having launched their joint mission of a particularly exclusive kind.

To appreciate the situation, it is perhaps best to note how its roots in Kierkegaard have branched into different lines, all being variants on the basic existential theme. Christian philosophy in its initial shaping was certainly a philosophy of Being, drawing heavily on its Greek origins, whilst the parallel Hebrew emphasis on existential decision and individual commitment is already prominent in St. Paul and St. Augustine. From this standpoint Kierkegaard did, and is doing anew to-day, a great service to religion by his ' existential type of thinking, for which every truth must be rung on the conscience of the thinker before it is sent out into the currency of the world '[2]; but, as Dr. Allen points out,[3] his influence on theology has been unfortunate.

In its modern form, existentialism emerged as a form of romanticism, in revolt against the rationalism of Hegelianism. We have already noticed its extreme development into the atheism of Sartre. On the other flank, the impact of this movement on theology

> ' was mediated in this country by the work of Barth, especially by Barth's commentary on *Romans* . . . The impression which the reading of Barth's *Romans* left on the average reader was that of the sovereignty of God and the insignificance and helplessness of man. Salvation must come, as revelation comes, perpendicularly from above, it impinges upon the horizontal line of human effort but does not really connect with it.'[4]

Canon Raven similarly observes,

> ' if God is, as Dr. Barth and his followers insist, the " wholly other " standing to us as the vertical to the horizontal and only cutting our plane at the sole point of Christ, then incarnation in any except a Gnostic or Arian sense would seem to be impossible, and any such relationship of religion with civilization, as Dr. Brunner advocates in the second series of his Gifford Lectures, can have no theological basis.'[5]

Furthermore,

> ' If nature is, as Dr. Barth insists, corrupt and meaningless, if natural theology is non-existent, it is strange that Jesus spent so much more time on it than on the subjects with which Christian preachers have since been usually concerned.'[6]

[2]E. L. Allen, in C. S. Spinks' *Religion in Britain since* 1900 (Dakers), p. 183.
[3]op. cit., p. 184.
[4]op cit., pp. 194-5.
[5]C. E. Raven, Gifford Lectures (Second Series), p. 42.
[6]op cit., p. 152.

I should also couple with these quotations the following comment by Canon Raven on

> 'the revolt against reason which has been so characteristic of recent orthodoxy. To ascribe it solely to the reaction against the identification of reason with scientific and quantitative studies would be to ignore two other elements which contribute to its support, the continuance of fundamentalist beliefs in the infallibility of Scripture and the revival of transcendentalist insistence upon the unknowable "otherness" of God. Each of these characteristics found their prophet in Soren Kierkegaard, the Danish man of letters of a century ago: and the immense influence of his works during the past twenty years has been at once the sign and the instrument of irrationalism. They satisfied the longing for authority and pandered to the general despondency both by their denunciation of human thought and effort and by their insistence that the Word of God can only be accepted with creaturely and unquestioning obedience. They cut the sinews of faith by declaring that there could be no coming of God's Kingdom within history, and provided excuse for acquiescence in sin by proclaiming that fallen man could only face a choice of evils. To argue against them was impossible and wicked, since reason was the enemy of faith and the proof of self-ill.'[7]

It is of course true that both Dr. Barth and Dr. Brunner have themselves given many shades to their thinking which make it difficult to isolate the heretical elements. Moreover, their writings are full of stimulating passages, clothed in language of the highest orthodoxy: they play so effectively on traditional Christian themes that the critical reason is apt to be lulled to slumber, so missing the underlying significance of the new authoritarianism put forward in traditional guise. But Barth's Gifford Lectures (1937-38)[8] make two critical issues clear, viz.: (i) natural theology is sinful, and (ii) the Church through its pastors of the Word is the authoritarian interpreter of the revelation of the hidden God, Who is 'wholly other' and only revealed through Christ, as recorded in Holy Scripture.

(i) rules out human reason and all that goes with it, viz. history, culture, science, literature, philosophy and the like: presumably, *rational* theology should be the most sinful of all. As for (ii), no method is available to determine which section or sections of the universal Church, if such there be, are to be looked upon as the true interpreters; this leaves us high and dry, having in mind the multitude of interpretations that are in constant warfare for the supreme title.

There have been several formidable criticisms of Barth and Brunner[9]: but one crushing indictment from within their own camp

[7] op cit., p. 52.
[8] op. cit., Hodder & Stoughton, 1938.
[9] c.f. footnote on p. 53, Raven, op. cit.

is to be found in *The New Modernism*, by Professor Cornelius Van Til of Philadelphia.[10] It is written to demonstrate the heretical character of their teaching and as a sturdy defence of the classical Reformed Faith, which Van Til asserts is the real target of its avowed prophets. Paradoxically, he sees elements of similarity in the new teaching with that of the Roman Church : certainly, the modern authoritarian implications are every whit as sweeping in the new version of the supremacy and interpretation of Scripture as in the old system of Papal and conciliar authority.

Van Til shows the new theology as breaking with all doctrines of Divine Immanence as against its conception of the hidden Divine Transcendence. It is this which is one of its basic heresies. Let us contrast with this the central themes of the teaching of the late William Temple, for example, with his emphasis on the immanent processes of Creation. It was his view that if there is in human experience any principle which explains the universe as a rational whole, it is the principle of Will ; but a Will which is the origin of the Universe is plainly the Creator, i.e. God. Moreover, if God as Creator does not apprehend the historic process as a process, then that process has no meaning, which would be unreasonable ; we must suppose that He apprehends the process not only in its completeness, but as a movement in its changes. It is the creation of His own Will ; consequently it is reasonable to hold that God is active in the process itself. He is enacting that which eternally He creates and contemplates.

But what of man's part in the process ? In Temple's view man, in fact, first actually experiences God in his power to appreciate absolute value, as the product of Creative Will. To be conscious of absolute Value is already to be in some form of intercourse with God ; and this comes to every human being. This religious experience in its developed form is emphatic in two directions. First, in its witness that God genuinely cares what men do. Secondly, religious experience asserts an activity of God within the souls of those who try to serve Him ; it also asserts the action of God's Providence in History.

The new theology, by contrast, lays it main emphasis on the depravity of man and God as ' wholly other ' : here we have the modern revival of the perverse elements in the teachings of St. Augustine, Luther and Calvin in whom these heretical strands had their origins. These three great figures were men of vision, courage and forthrightness, but they each seem to have had a streak of morbidity in their make-up which emerged in the emphasis on

[10]Van Til, op cit., J. Clarke & Co., London, 1946.

original sin and the depravity of man and nature, coupled with the doctrines of irresistible grace and election, or in plain words, predestination, at the will of an arbitrary God who not only makes the election, but also decrees the fall of those creatures destined to perdition. For Luther, the depravity of humanity is *intima pessima* and *profundissima*. It was this element of distorted teaching which marred the development of the Reformation, and it is odd that it should have been taken over from St. Augustine, together with a quasi-Augustinian conception of 'illumination' in regard to the interpretation of the scripture as the channel of revelation. The process is inspired, for Luther at any rate, by the Holy Spirit who is active both in scripture and also in the mind of man who interprets it: but this promising approach was vitiated by the extreme emphasis on depravity and original sin. Luther and Calvin overplayed this: concupiscence even in thought became the keynote of sin and Zwingli (the Reformation counterpart of Marcion) found no support for his theme that original sin is a disease (*morbus*) and not an offence (*peccatum*). This position is brought out by Leighton Pullan in his book, *Religion since the Reformation* (Oxford, 1923), where he draws attention to the basic Lutheran attitude to reason.

Barth and Niebuhr seem to revive Calvin's and Luther's respective outlooks in this field, and it is not surprising that we have a new phase of irreason, coupled with extreme claims for scripture, competently and authoritatively interpreted, as the medium of revelation of God through Christ. Yet it was Luther who declared that 'No part of Holy Scripture is dark' and that 'It belongs to each and every Christian to know and judge of the doctrine'. But Pullan[11] couples those quotations with Luther's twist to irreason, as he approved the will which 'wrings the neck of reason and strangles the beast . . . But how? It holds to God's word: let it be right and true no matter how foolish and impossible it sounds'. With the Lutheran denunciation of reason must be coupled Calvin's teaching on predestination: for him, 'God is not primarily love, but infinite arbitrary power': this was an adoption of one of the heretical strands of the later phases of Scholasticism.

It would be well to note how these dark strands are once again obscuring so much that is living and valid in the new theology: such a basis rejects the fact demonstrated in religious history that natural theology as the exposition of general revelation in history, science, culture and philosophy is the necessary counterpart of the interpretation of special revelation. The two serve as poles be-

[11]op. cit., pp. 73-74.

tween which the development of religion can remain true to all experience, whilst fostering its spiritual strand. We must thus work back from Barth through Brunner, who seems more ready to find a place for human experience, through Calvin and Luther, who appear to offer the same contrast of degrees of perverseness, back to Aquinas who provided more than anyone the necessary correctives to the roots of this perversity in St. Augustine. Aquinas summed up the position thus: 'For just as, by his intellectual faculty, man is a sharer of the divine knowledge through the virtue of faith, and by his faculty of desire of the divine love through the virtue of charity, so also by the nature of the soul he shares, after a similitude, the divine nature through a certain rebirth or new creation.'[12]

It is a great pity that the Protestant Churches tend so consistently to overlook their joint inheritance with the Roman Church, of the long line of Christian philosophy which culminated in Aquinas nearly three centuries before the Reformation. This propounded a system of natural theology, which was progressively recognised as a valid counterpart of Christian orthodox belief, and which deserves re-interpretation and further development in the light of modern knowledge. In so doing, a new synthesis would seek to recapture also the other strand of natural theology which found expression in the Cambridge Platonists of the seventeenth century.

We have now reached the point at which some constructive conclusion is needed. Firstly, attention should be drawn to the ameliorating influences at work on this situation. This can be indicated by four books typical of the more liberal-minded approach to modern religion, viz.: (i) a modern Methodist interpretation of Luther in *Let God be God* (Epworth Press, 1947), by P. S. Watson; (ii) a statement of the neo-Thomist approach in *Existence and Analogy* (Longmans, 1949), by E. L. Mascall; (iii) an essay in the function of religious history and symbolism, entitled *Christianity and the New Situation* (Allen & Unwin, 1953), by E. G. Lee; and lastly (iv) the orthodox and visionary presentation of Anglican Liberalism in the Second Series of Canon C. E. Raven's Gifford Lectures, already mentioned. A reading of these four books, as typical of much current thinking, should go far to revive the spirit of liberal-minded Christianity from the authoritarian and fundamentalist onslaughts.

Nevertheless, having said so much, it is but right to reaffirm

[12]quoted H. C. O'Neill, *New Things and Old in Saint Aquinas* (Dent, 1909), p. 86.

as our second point the great debt due to Kierkegaard for his emphasis on individual commitment as basic to the religious life. Indeed, it is very true that this revival of Kierkegaard has restored to the religious life three basic features so essential to its forward growth, viz. : (*a*) the need for individual decision and commitment, as a leap from the mundane to the spiritual order but as a leap *with* reason, and not by victory over reason : it should not involve the negation of the world, but rather its dedication ; (*b*) the process of spiritual history as being founded in contemporaneity, in that the believer must seek to relive the Christian Gospel through the symbols and culture of his age and in his own life and situation ; in this way he will enter into the real meaning of the revelation of God given through Christ ; and (*c*) the polarity of 'Christ in me' and 'myself in Christ' as the way of spiritual growth.

Space does not permit more than brief development of (*b*) and (*c*) to emphasize the essence of Christianity as focused on the Eternal Christ, who was manifested uniquely in Jesus. It surely follows from (*c*) that the Christ-Spirit is active in and through men for the shaping of the world and its history. Equally, the individual lives spiritually 'in Christ' and there re-finds himself as both a spiritual person-in-the-making and a potential member of the spiritual society focused on the Eternal Christ.

PRESENT TRENDS IN OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES

By Rev. Professor S. G. F. Brandon, M.A., D.D.

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I

ONE of the most interesting figures in the Early Christian Church is surely that of Marcion. Unfortunately we can see him only through the accounts of his orthodox opponents, and it is unlikely that they have represented him fairly and without prejudice. Nevertheless, he appears clearly to have been a man of original thought, especially in his views of the Old Testament. Irenaeus regarded him as a Gnostic and wrote of him as follows: 'And Marcion of Pontus came in his place (i.e. Cerdon's, who was a Gnostic teacher), and extended his school, shamelessly blaspheming Him who is called God by the Law and the Prophets; affirming Him to be an evil-doer, and fond of wars, and inconstant also in His judgment, and contrary to Himself: and as for Jesus, that he came from that Father who is above the God who made the world . . . to do away the Prophets and the Law and all the works of that God who made the world, whom he calls also Ruler of the world.'[1] From this account it is obvious that Marcion had shaken himself free of the traditional Christian respect for the Old Testament and had endeavoured to evaluate its evidence critically. To him the God depicted therein appeared an evil being, and he, accordingly, differentiated him from, and made him subordinate to, that God who was the Father of Jesus.[2]

For this and for his other views, the Church condemned Marcion as a heretic. In so doing it reacted, from a true instinct for self-preservation, to a threat to the very foundations of its faith. For, whatever problems they might entail, the Church knew that its roots lay in the sacred writings of Israel.

But Holy Scripture though it was, the Old Testament had necessarily to be interpreted in order to make it authorize or endorse Christian doctrine. This process of interpretation commenced indeed with the commencement of Christianity itself. Thus in the Lukan Gospel the Risen Lord, on the very evening

[1] *Adv. Haereses* I, xxvii, 1-3; trans. *Library of the Fathers* (Parkers & Co., Oxford), vol. xlii, 78 sq.

[2] Cf. H. Lietzmann, *Geschichte der Alten Kirche* (Berlin u. Leipsig, 1937), pp. 265 sq.

of the first Easter Day, is depicted as explaining to the perplexed disciples on the way to Emmaus: 'Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory? And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.'[3]

This exegesis of the Old Testament, which thus began so early, has been assiduously pursued ever since. A history of the undertaking would reveal some truly amazing interpretations especially by the Early Fathers, who paid little or no regard to the historical context of any passage with which they were concerned, and who worked on the assumption that, since they were dealing with divine oracles, some spiritual truth must be deduced from them.[4] However, apart from such bizarre examples, which were often inspired by the need to explain passages of an obscure or shocking character, the great narrative sections of the Old Testament came to exercise a profound influence on the Christian mind. Since the stories in the Hexateuch were taken literally as the record of God's providential acts, it was believed that in those writings the crucial events of mankind's past were to be learned and their meaning pondered. Of the way in which this sacred history was known and valued the literature and art of the Middle Ages provide abundant and graphic evidence — as one example, which constitutes a precious part of our national heritage, we may recall the splendid series of sculptures around the Chapter House of Salisbury Cathedral representing sixty incidents from the Creation to the proclamation of the Mosaic Law. Of the well-known influence of the Old Testament upon Puritan thought and ways, it will suffice here to refer to Macaulay's statement: 'They (the Puritans) baptized their children by the names, not of Christian saints, but of Hebrew patriarchs and warriors.'[5]

The fierceness of the passions, which were aroused during the Victorian era over such issues as the age of the earth and the evolution of the natural species, testifies to the strength of the traditional belief in the historical truth of the Old Testament records. To-day it is amusing to recall that Milman's *History of the Jews*, which was published in 1830 and which Dr. Stanley described as 'the first decisive inroad of German theology into England, the first palpable indication that the Bible could be studied like another book: that the characters and events of sacred history could be

[3] *Luke* xxiv, 26-27.

[4] Cf. E. von Dobschütz in Hasting's *Encycl. of Religion and Ethics*, II pp. 597b-598a.

[5] *History of England*, vol. i, ch. i (ed. London, 1871), 1, 40. Cf. G. M. Trevelyan, *English Social History* (London, 1945), pp. 234-6.

treated at once critically and reverently'—that this book was denounced from the pulpit of St. Mary's, Oxford, and more serious measures against its author were for some time contemplated. Equally significant now is the fact that the great Semitic scholar William Robertson Smith was removed from the professoriate of the Free Church College, Aberdeen, for his article on 'Hebrew Language and Literature' in the 1880 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

In that work, which constitutes a landmark in the liberalization of Anglican theological thought, namely, the collection of essays published in 1889 by Charles Gore and his friends under the title of *Lux Mundi*, what has become the accepted Anglican attitude (indeed one might well say the attitude of English-speaking Christianity) towards the Old Testament emerges clearly. It is concisely expressed in Gore's own words when he says: 'it is of the essence of the Old Testament to be imperfect because it represents a gradual process of education by which man was lifted out of the depths of sin and ignorance'.[6] What this was to mean in practical exegesis is evident in A. Lyttelton's essay in the same work entitled, 'The Preparation in History for Christ'. The thesis, which was now to be developed, was in its evaluation of the Old Testament essentially apologetical. The Hebrew writings were no longer regarded as the oracles of God *in se*, to be interpreted as such relative to specific questions of Christian faith and practice. Instead they were to be taken, as a whole, as evidencing the gradual unfolding of the Divine Purpose until its end was achieved in the Incarnation. Accordingly, Lyttleton defined his task as a successive consideration of three points, namely, (1) 'The relations between Israel and the world at the Christian era'; (2) 'The fitness of Israel to be the seed-plot of a world-religion, and of the world-religion given by Christ'; (3) 'The character of the process by which the Israel, so fitted, and so placed, had come to be'.[7]

II

It is along these lines that the accepted Christian estimate of the Old Testament in this country has been established and developed. This estimate is based essentially upon a number of *a priori* assumptions, which are in fact acts of faith. They are, mainly, that God is a Person, intent on revealing Himself to mankind, the crown of His creation; that this revelation is contained in

[6] *Op. cit.* (ed. 1904), p. 240.
[7] *Lux Mundi*, p. 110.

two groups of ancient writings, namely, the Old and New Testaments; that the Old Testament, which is the product of Israel, proves that Israel was God's chosen people, through whom this revelation was given; that the ancient Hebrew documents, whether they be describing such events as the Temptation and Fall of Adam or recording the utterances of the prophets, are to be understood as the gradual revelation of God's purpose to save mankind, which culminated in the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of His Son in the person of the historical Jesus of Nazareth.

It is undoubtedly owing to a certain uneasy awareness that this estimate of the Old Testament involves, as it does, a series of claims to supernatural knowledge that Christian Old Testament scholarship has come largely to assume an apologetical character. This means in effect that, while continuing to expound the Old Testament along the lines of the traditional exegesis, there is an under-current of anxiety to show that 'the Bible is true' by utilizing any scrap of archaelogical material which may be deemed valuable to this end. Consequently, the invocation of archaeological evidence in many professedly Christian studies of the Old Testament is both puerile and pathetic, because it is so often manifestly based on the assumption that if, for example, some piece of Old Testament chronology or a reference to some custom or institution can be attested archaeologically, then the case for the Church's evaluation of the Old Testament is scientifically strengthened, if not demonstrated.[8]

However, while the study of the Old Testament still continues largely to be inspired by Christian interest, there has steadily been growing up what may be described as a secular expert interest in ancient Israel and its cultural achievement. Moreover, it may fairly be said that it is this secular approach which prevails in the work which is being done in the Semitics departments of those universities which possess them and in what is regarded as most significant in published studies, both by way of books and articles in learned journals. This secular concern with the Old Testament is naturally not based on any *a priori* assumptions about Israel's being the chosen people of God. Instead, Israel is regarded as one of the nations of the ancient Near East, whose records must be studied with the same care and objectiveness as those of its neighbours, whether they be the mighty states of Egypt and Mesopotamia, or petty kingdoms such as Ugarit and Mari. By such comparative study, what was common and what was unique in Hebrew life and institutions are gradually becoming more clear.

[8] A notorious example of this was the late Sir Charles Marston's book, *The Bible is True*.

A good and instructive example for our consideration of this process is afforded by what may be described as the 'Myth and Ritual' thesis. This line of interpretation was initiated by Professor S. H. Hooke and other English scholars in a series of lectures which were published in 1933 under the title of *Myth and Ritual*.[9] Since that time the thesis has proved very influential, especially on the Continent, in stimulating further research and elaboration of its basic ideas or in provoking valuable work in opposition to it. Most recently, indeed during the past academic year, another series of lectures has been given by a group of British and foreign scholars in the University of Manchester, under the chairmanship of Professor Hooke, on the present position of the 'Myth and Ritual' theory after more than two decades of discussion; these lectures are in due course to be published.[10] From the point of view of our present subject, the significance of this line of interpretation lies in the fact that it is maintained that there existed throughout the ancient Near East a common pattern of myth and ritual which was centred on the institution of sacred kingship and involved the idea of the death and resurrection of a divine king. Seen in the light of this theory, Israelite kingship assumes a very different aspect from that which it appears to have in the extant versions of the Old Testament documents. Further, the cult of Yahweh is found to exhibit features common to the cults of other deities in that area, while many Hebrew customs acquire a new significance and many obscure passages in the Psalms take on a fresh meaning. There remains, of course, much in which Israel was notably different in faith and practice in this context, and in particular the part played by the Yahwist party in explaining ancient rites, which had grown objectionable, in terms of Yahweh's ordering of History on behalf of his people becomes very evident. But, however all that may be, the logic of the 'Myth and Ritual' theory as a whole points to the original integration of Israel into the cultural pattern common to the Near Eastern peoples in ancient times.

The 'Myth and Ritual' thesis has yet a further significance for us relative to our present subject. When the thesis was originally propounded, it was evident that most of the scholars concerned therein were deeply interested in its ultimate significance

[9] A second series of essays on the same theme was edited by Dr. Hooke under the title *The Labyrinth* (London, 1935). Cf. the present writer's article 'Divine Kings and Dying Gods', in *The Hibbert Journal*, vol. liii (1955), pp. 327-333.

[10] The Cissie Blundell Lectures. The lectures were given by S. H. Hooke, S. Smith, H. W. Fairman, R. de Langhe, G. Widengren, A. R. Johnson, H. H. Rowley, and S. G. F. Brandon.

for Christianity. It fell to Professor E. O. James in particular to deal with this issue, and he brought to the task great learning and profound Christian insight. Having noted the striking parallels between the concept of Jesus as the divine Messianic King, who died to give his people life, and that of the sacred king, whose ritual death and resurrection formed so vital a part of the cult pattern of the ancient Near East, Professor James saw therein a veritable *Praeparatio Evangelii*. He wrote: 'Thus at the beginning of the Christian era the stage was set for a new act in the ancient drama of the divine kingship and its ritual pattern . . . With the break-up of the Roman Empire, the scattered fragments were again brought together, like the dismembered body of Osiris, this time round the figure of a spiritual Divine king, "incarnated once and for all in order ever after to rule the souls of men"; invested in a scarlet robe, a crown of thorns, and a reed for a sceptre, and dying to live on a cross which has become symbolized as the tree of life."[11] The conception is indeed a noble and an inspiring one, and it would seem to have great apologetical value. Unfortunately, however, in the hands of a skilful antagonist such parallels could be equally well interpreted as a powerful argument for the derivative and syncretistic nature of the pattern of Christian soeriology. The issue here is a very complicated one, and, since it has been dealt with at some length by the present speaker in the Manchester symposium, already referred to, it must suffice now to state summarily that the true solution appears to involve a set of very different considerations, and that it is a solution which will scarcely be deemed congenial to the traditional view of orthodox belief.

In short, it may fairly be said of the 'Myth and Ritual' thesis, as a notable trend in recent Old Testament study, that it is increasingly moving away from any original apologetical interest which those who initiated it might have had, and that it has become an enquiry concerning the general cultural evolution, during the first two millenia B.C., of that area which the late Professor Breasted so aptly named 'the Fertile Crescent'. The whole development of this debate does indeed underline the fact that, where specialist research is being made into the records of the Old Testament, it tends to become an academic discipline inspired by secular interests, and it appears to provide little or no sustenance for the traditional Christian interpretation of these writings as the revelation of the purpose of God.

[11] *Christian Myth and Ritual* (London, 1937), pp. 40-41. See also his essay in *The Labyrinth* entitled 'The Sources of Christian Ritual'.

A second, and perhaps even more illuminating instance of what might be called 'present trends in Old Testament study' is constituted by the controversy which centres round the so-called Qumrân or Dead Sea scrolls. By this time, owing to the degree of publicity which has been given to it, it is a matter of common knowledge that the discovery of these Scrolls represents the most important discovery ever made in the field of biblical archaeology. To gain possession of Hebrew writings which actually date from the first century A.D., and in some instances even earlier, is something for which a few decades ago biblical scholars could scarcely dared have hoped. That such a find, especially in view of the obscure circumstances in which it was originally made, should provide much material for specialist debate was only to be expected: e.g. the dating both of the manuscripts themselves and that of their deposit in the caves naturally involve the estimate of many factors about which there must inevitably be differences of expert opinion. On such matters there has been, and still continues to be, much debate; but what is more significant from our present point of view is the controversy which has arisen about the interpretation of the documents themselves, or rather of certain of them which are of especial interest.

If the Qumrân scrolls had comprised only copies of certain books of the Old Testament, it is likely that, when once their date and provenance had been satisfactorily established, they would have given rise to no serious controversy, unless they had also contained serious deviations from the traditional text of those books. So far as the Bible manuscripts found at Qumrân are concerned, this is so; they have provided no great surprises, and in the main they support the textual tradition. But what has provoked controversy is a number of writings hitherto unknown and which appear to embody the ideas of the community which originally owned them and caused them to be hidden away in the caves at some moment of great danger. These documents reveal the existence of a Jewish sect which held some truly remarkable, and until now unknown, beliefs, while at the same time apparently remaining within the fold of Judaism. Archaeological work, which has been carried out on the Qumrân site, has produced confirmatory evidence of the communal life lived by the original owners of these scrolls there in the vicinity of the Dead Sea.[12]

It is in the interpretation of these beliefs and their relation to

[12]Cf. G. Lankester Harding in *The Illustrated London News*, Sept. 3rd, 1955, pp. 379-381; A. Dupont Sommer, *The Jewish Sect of Qumran and the Essenes* (London, 1954), chap. i; but see also A. Parrot in *Revue d'Histoire et Philosophie religieuses*, vol. xxxv, pp. 61 sq.

Christianity that the cause of the dispute resides. Of the several theories which have been advanced, those of Professor Dupont-Sommer[13] and Dr. J. L. Teicher[14] have stirred up the greatest excitement. According to the French scholar, the so-called 'Teacher of Righteousness', about whose person or memory the devotion of the Qumrân community centred, was a veritable prototype of the Saviour Jesus, in that he too, only much earlier, had died for the sins of his people and been raised to life again and was identified with the Messiah. Dr. Teicher has sought to show that the Qumrân community was actually Christian and comprised part of the original apostolic company which survived the Jewish catastrophe of A.D. 70.

The challenge which each of these interpretations constitutes to the traditional view of Christian Origins is obvious, and it is natural that reaction to it should be vigorous. However, from the point of view of strict scholarship, the ensuing situation is unfortunate. Here for the first time we are apparently given an opportunity of first-hand insight into a remarkable complex of Jewish belief and custom which was contemporaneous with the rise of Christianity. To exploit this opportunity to the fullest clearly demands the patient and unremitting investigation of expert authorities, who can proceed with their task uninfluenced by any *a priori* conclusions and undisturbed by partisan interests. But such unfortunately is not the case. Already, before even all the texts have been published, pronouncements have been made that the Qumrân discoveries either radically affect the traditional view of Christian Origins or that they are quite irrelevant. If we may learn here from the past history of scholarship, it is likely that many decades of careful research and discussion will be necessary before the proper bearing of this new evidence can be assessed: e.g. although the Ras Shamra texts were first discovered in 1929, their interpretation and their significance for Old Testament studies are still matters for expert enquiry and debate.[15] Perhaps

[13] Cf. *Aperçus préliminaires sur les Manuscrits de la Mer Morte* (Paris, 1950); *The Jewish Sect of Qumran and the Essenes* (London, 1954); 'Les Manuscrits de la Mer Morte; leur importance pour l'Histoire des Religions', in *Numen*, II (1955), pp. 168-189.

[14] 'The Dead Sea Scrolls—Documents of the Jewish-Christian sect of the Ebionites', 'The Damascus Fragments and the origin of the Jewish-Christian sect', in *The Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. ii (1950-1); 'Jesus in the Habakkuk Scroll', 'The Teaching of the Pre-Pauline Church in the Dead Sea Scroll', 'Material Evidence of the Christian Origin of the Dead Sea Scrolls', in *op. cit.*, vol. iii (1952), vol. iv (1953).

[15] Cf. J. Gray, 'The Ras Shamra Texts: a Critical Assessment', in *The Hibbert Journal*, vol. liii (1954-5), pp. 115-126.

the most that can safely be said at present about the Qumrân discoveries is that they point to the existence of syncretistic beliefs among the Jews, not of the Diaspora, which has long been admitted, but of Judaea itself, which has always been regarded as the citadel of Jewish orthodoxy. It is interesting to note that in this respect this new material but confirms what might already have been learned from Josephus, the Jewish historian who lived at this time, but whose testimony has been generally distrusted by Jewish and Christian scholars alike.[16]

III

It is now time to gather up our findings about recent trends in Old Testament study. As a generalization it might be fairly maintained that the study of the Old Testament moves along two main lines. Real research into ancient Hebrew life and thought is inspired by secular interest, namely, to understand the culture of Israel as a phenomenon of the life of the ancient Near East. Such research is undertaken without presuppositions about Israel's special vocation in the fulfilment of the divine purpose for mankind; its findings are in keeping with its scientific premisses. In contrast orthodox exegesis continues in the main to follow traditional lines, only utilizing feebly the conclusions of scientifically-conducted research, where it is felt that these can be represented as endorsing the traditional view. And here we may note in passing, as a variation of this procedure, that an even more antiquated method of exegesis has recently been refurbished in the form of the biblical typology, of which Fr. Thornton is the leading exponent.

The logic of all this is inescapable: so long as the Christian evaluation of the Old Testament is based upon what after all was originally a piece of Jewish nationalist prejudice, namely, that Israel was the chosen people of God, the gulf must continue to widen between Christian exegesis and the conclusions of scientifically-conducted research.

The situation, however, is not hopeless; it can be righted by courageous thought, inspired by the basic, and surely self-evident, truth that God has no favourites among the nations and that He is revealed in the culture and history of each. If only Christian scholars would be prepared to study the religious faith and practice of Israel's neighbours in the ancient Near East with the same

[16] Cf. A. T. Nikolainen, *Der Auferstehungsglauben in der Bibel und ihrer Umwelt* (Helsinki, 1944), I, pp. 173-178. See also A. Dupont-Sommer, 'Le problème des influences étrangères sur la sect juive de Qoumrân', in *Revue d'Histoire et Philosophie religieuses*, vol. xxxv (1955), pp. 75-94.

sympathy and zeal which they devote to the study of the Old Testament, they would gain a richer and a deeper understanding of man's search for realtiy and of God's response. And in turn, if they would look beyond the confines of the ancient Near East to the spiritual achievements and failures of other races, especially those of the Orient, they would realize how inadequate and circumscribed is that view which holds that all which was spiritually vital to mankind was played out between the narrow confines of Palestine, so tendentiously called 'the Holy Land'.

PRESENT TRENDS IN NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

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THE sense of excitement generated by this subject is due in part at least to a half-acknowledged sense of the human importance of New Testament studies. They include studies in the gospels, and the gospels are about Jesus, whom men of the highest integrity and intellectual ability have long claimed and still claim to be the final revelation of God: therefore we are bound to wonder if the 'latest discoveries' in this sphere advance us nearer some immediate view of that figure. Just as we hope that an elaboration and refinement in telescope making might bring our own sight in immediate contact with some distant world fascinating by its very distance and by the clue which knowledge of it would give to an understanding of the universe, so we hope that the patience and brilliance of gospel research may produce a clear account of Jesus himself, to still all doubts, to silence all disbelief, and to bring us into a kind of immediate contact with God.

A difficulty is inherent in this unexamined approach: if Jesus was God incarnate, whatever picture can be presented of him must transcend comprehension and cannot be translated out of the terms in which we find it. If we insist that we can carry out that translation and can present the historical Jesus to ourselves as we would have a contemporary figure presented, then we unconsciously make the assumption that he is not more than the Nazarene carpenter, or else that God presented as man is nearly identifiable with man, that humanity and divinity are not sharply distinguishable.

How far this was acknowledged by the Tübingen school is a question which need not detain us : we know that they insisted on seeking to discover 'what actually happened'. This is the same question, the same insistence, which we meet in the fundamentalists. Although the account given by each school of what did happen differs so widely, they exhibit the same strength and the same weakness : they insist on the historic foundation of Christianity, and they exhibit the same confidence in their respective ability to answer the radical question. One takes for granted that all miracle is unhistorical, the other accepts all miracle without discrimination as simple historical fact.

We owe something to-day to both : the critics' desire to know what really happened reminds us forcefully of the fact that the gospels are clearly written with presuppositions of a most far-reaching and candid kind, while the fundamentalist—especially the more literate kind of to-day—takes his stand by the writers and affirms their affirmations unchanged. Of course, the fundamentalist is often quite unaware that these assertions mean something entirely different in his contexts from those of the evangelist, but at least he shows some respect for that supernatural element which is for them the most important aspect of their subject. But we have to examine the question whether these two 'schools' have asked the right question of the New Testament evidence. If we are to understand the present trends in New Testament studies we must see clearly that the controversy as it has developed is concerned not so much with the question, 'What actually happened?' as with the debate as to whether that is the sort of information which the New Testament wishes to give us. For what chiefly occupies the contemporary scholar in this sphere is the task of showing the sort of literature the New Testamen comprises, the task of showing that it is theological literature, that its theology is the theology of men steeped in the Old Testament with its own profound and comprehensive psychology and understanding of experience, its passionate conviction that God's rule is to be established ; that therefore the New Testament is through and through eschatological. Whether the particular interpretations of a Farrer or the special theory, for example, of a lectionary background of the Gospel of S. Mark of a Carrington, are right, may be questioned. That Jesus and his disciples themselves thought in terms of Messiah, 'he that should come', Elijah redivivus, the new Moses, and so forth, and that they belonged to, and that their whole task was meaningless outside the context of a people with a Book and some sort of lectionary, could be denied only by those equipped with a perfect ignorance of the subject.

What is true of Jesus and the disciples is of course true of the evangelists. In this connexion it is worth referring to a review-article by Dr. D. E. Nineham in *Theology*, March 1956, of Dr. V. Taylor's recent book, *The Life and Ministry of Jesus*,[1] a work written in the conviction (to quote the article) 'that the gospels, if submitted to an honest and fearless, but at the same time reasonable and untendentious, criticism, yield a picture of the life and work of Jesus which is historically consistent and intelligible'. Dr. Nineham questions even 'the possibility of such attempted reconstructions', and proceeds to make some trenchant and concise remarks very relevant to our subject: it is true that Jesus was a historical figure and we must be assured that the gospels and other New Testament writings consist of 'fair comment' on his life and ministry; but this does not mean either that the gospels described the course and development of the Lord's life like those of any other human life nor that it is necessary for our faith that we in 1956 should be able so to describe them. We can believe that Christianity is historically founded without believing that we can write a historical outline of the life of Christ on the basis of the gospels, and to write such an outline fell outside the interests and purposes of the evangelists.

Their interests and purposes were clear: they were charged with proclaiming that God had come in Christ, that therefore his judgment and kingdom were here, that the consummation of both was imminent. This proclamation is the theme of every work in the New Testament, however different its emphasis.

We have then to put on trial the very questions we find so natural: 'What actually happened?'—'What are the conceptions or language of the reporters?'—'What are the reporters implying when they use this language?'—and—'Are their implications and assertions translatable into other terms?' We have not the material for an answer to the first question, and contemporary study of the New Testament is concerned rather with the others, for our sources are not reporting: they are proclaiming. This is the first solid fact which present New Testament studies take seriously: if Paul cried, 'I was determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified!'[2] this is an exaggeration only for the sake of a very justifiable emphasis, and needs to be corrected only by words which he can himself supply, 'I passed on to you at the first what I too had received from others, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to

[1] Macmillan, 1954; 12s. 6d.
[2] *I Cor.* ii, 2.

the scriptures . . .'[3] Not only Paul but also the gospels, not only these but all the works of the New Testament are concerned with this proclamation, this *kerygma*. Prof. C. H. Dodd, in a book of pocket size, has brilliantly summed this up for us as long ago as 1936 in *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*. A great deal of the fruitful work of the present time owes—and it gladly acknowledges the debt—its basis to this book and its central idea, that we can see the work of the early Church and the plan of the literature which arose from it clearly founded upon the pattern of its conviction and the way that conviction was proclaimed. Sometimes we find that pattern before us unelaborated as in the creed-like passage at the beginning of the fifteenth chapter of 1 *Corinthians* from which I have just quoted; sometimes it is rather that all the material available to the writer has been allowed to crystallize round this central pattern, as in a gospel.

This notion is now receiving some modification by constructive criticism: was there a *kerygma* so compact, so universal, so persistent throughout the time of the Church's early development and its different centres as that which Dodd reconstructs? Was not Luke, for example, inevitably and profoundly influenced by the distance in time at which he stood from the events of his writings so that his *kerygma* must necessarily contain an additional 'word', or at least be delivered from a viewpoint, an angle, which distinguishes it from the others? For Luke writes for his own public, and earnestly protests the political innocence of the persons and cause of his brief; but inseparably from this plea must make his proclamation of the crucified and risen Christ in the form of an insistence on his temporary absence, and that absence must be seen as perfectly consistent with, nay, as actually constituting his reign at the right hand of God. Yet even this individual form is *kerygma*, and is consistent with the original proclamation of those who, startled themselves, startled the world with the claim that the resurrection had begun. Luke has made a gospel message out of that very delay in the return of the Lord which might seem to hinder that gospel.

This example of the Lucan form of the *kerygma* must suffice to show the way in which the idea and its modification occupy New Testament students at the present time. It would be impossible to consider even thus briefly the form of the *kerygma* in all the different parts of the New Testament as present studies reveal it; but we can draw attention to the growing power of the

[3] *I Cor.* xv, 3-4.

demonstration of this unitive theme throughout the New Testament: it may seem that no works could be so strongly contrasted as the book of Revelation and, say, the Epistle to the Romans. But in the former as in the latter we can discover the same pattern of prophesied events, summarized most usefully in yet a third work, the Gospel of S. Mark. There, in the thirteenth chapter, which critics now regard less emphatically as a detachable 'Little Apocalypse' and with more regard to its integral place in the gospel, we see the universal expectation of the early Church and may ask ourselves whether this is founded upon the words of its Lord: wars, famines, the preaching of the word of God, persecutions, cosmic signs, the rise of evil in some visible and terrifying form, and its final overthrow—a scheme in which the preaching or proclaiming led through persecution of the preachers inevitably to the final dénouement.

We have travelled a long and necessary journey from the days of 'Jesus or Paul?' If the New Testament proclaims a gospel we shall expect to find it—so contemporary students would claim—in the epistles of St. Paul. If they are genuine epistles we shall modify our expectation because we can readily imagine that Paul and his companions proclaimed the Gospel by word of mouth and dealt in writing rather with difficulties of doctrine, discipline, order, and administration which arose naturally and unsystematically among the varied peoples who had received the gospel and were therefore formed into a Church. Nevertheless, there are interesting exceptions: some pointers there are to the message which the Church in question had originally received, as when Paul appeals to the baptismal experience of his addressees and to what he had told them when he first preached to them, about the creed of the Church into which they had been baptized, about the delayed return of the Lord. And at least once he lets himself go in a general exposition of his grand argument, writing to the Roman Christians on an occasion which seems fairly easy to date but whose psychological aspects form a fascinating field for conjecture.

'If they are genuine epistles'—if we approach them as those who are willing to be taught by them, rather than as wishing to apply our own yardstick, we shall learn their vocabulary and their doctrine and then ask how far they clarify one another, how far they pose problems. If we carry out this plan we find ourselves still doubtful about the authenticity of Ephesians, though rejoicing to possess in it at least the appendix to the Pauline library and privately thinking that even St. Paul could not have preached a finer sermon. Of the rest we shall be very much inclined to

accept all except the Pastorals; we shall be willing, too, to labour to understand both the content and the context of these last, and very likely to accept the results of P. N. Harrison's industrious work upon them, especially now that he has reduced the genuine Pauline fragments in them from five to three, not by decreasing the amount of genuine material but by absorbing this into a smaller number of letters.

We cannot be sure that the ingenious reconstructions of Paul's career such as those of W. L. Knox do not owe their charm to a smoothness which has meant the wearing away of features really vital to its true shape (a criticism which can certainly be levelled in the same terms exactly to the translations of Paul's epistles by J. B. Phillips), and the work continues patiently in journals devoted to New Testament or Bible studies, now existing in numbers which do something to mitigate the exasperation of scholars whose work must wait months or even years for publication. Such reconstructions will lean to-day more upon references in Paul's own works, with less reliance upon Acts, a book now no less than formerly a sphere where many rival views may be displayed; but if the very scholarly near-fundamentalist F. F. Bruce is able to take it as unadorned history capable just as it stands of reconciliation with other evidence, the general tendency is to see it as a work in some respects comparable to the gospels, that is, a work in which narrative form is used to convey theological verities. The issue is complicated here because the theological verities which Luke sets out to convey are broadly historical in themselves: Christianity is a legitimate—the legitimate—issue of Judaism, the Church received its instructions from one whom it acknowledges as king but whose kingship does not threaten Caesar; those instructions were to witness to that kingship by and in the process of spreading the claim to it, which is the gospel, which is the proclamation of forgiveness of sins, from Jerusalem outwards; the surging wave of this gospel breaks in different patterns on the land of Jew and Gentile, but the tides need not be thought to clash head-on. Indeed, the current, fed by all its tributary streams, flows majestically on to Rome. As a chronicle this is so great an over-simplification that it falsifies the details of history, but its broad sweep compels assent. In sum, we see Luke, whose authorship of Luke-Acts is nowadays widely accepted, as a theological writer employing history as his medium, rather than a historian of the early church in the modern sense of that phrase.

If this be the way in which contemporary scholars approach the historical element in the New Testament, beginning carefully with Paul, their theological understanding may also profitably

begin with the epistles; for they are of course the earliest compositions in the New Testament, and this gives them a claim to be studied before the gospels, which narrate, but are far from contemporary with the earliest Christian events. This way of approach may be illustrated, to take a recent example, by the contribution by J. C. Fenton in the volume commemorating R. H. Lightfoot.[4] Here themes certainly central to the *kerygma* (Fulfilment, Hiding and Revealing, Defeat and Victory, Jesus is Lord, Faith and Discipleship, The Future) are shown to be given a treatment in *St. Mark* consistent with that in the epistles of St. Paul.

We have come back to the oldest of the gospels, and it is time to say something more specific about the contemporary study of it. Streeter, who wrote in *The Four Gospels* as long ago as 1924 what is still the best study of their origins, showed in this book the value of Mark as the foundation gospel, a position which is of course enhanced rather than disturbed if, following Streeter in this, we do not follow him in his belief in a second independent primitive gospel in the first draft of *Luke*. But the presumption that here we had the least theological of the gospels so that in it we could find the Jesus of history is perhaps the most important shattered illusion of the last thirty years of New Testament study. When C. H. Turner joined Burkitt in 1929 in connecting the gospel primarily with St. Peter and agreed to contrast it with the rest of the New Testament as not being a product of the Church, Rawlinson had already in 1925 started another and more fruitful approach: the tradition written down by Mark was inseparable from doctrine, and was the Church's tradition. This appraisal, with the added influence of Form-criticism from Germany, produced in 1934 R. H. Lightfoot's Bampton Lectures on *History and Interpretation in the Gospels* and in 1950 his *The Gospel Message of St. Mark*, in both of which he drew out in striking fashion the very pervasive and formative theological conceptions which determined the character of the gospel. In 1951 Dr. Farrer followed with the first of his series of typological studies in this sphere—*A Study in St. Mark*. We need not go the whole way with any of these critics, but New Testament studies will certainly not retreat to the position of 1929; and we may guess that neither will they accept the way of interpretation suggested by the brilliant German scholar Bultmann. Heir both to the old Liberal school and to the Lutheran tradition of his own confession Bultmann has insisted on facing the question of historicity in the

[4] *Studies in the Gospels*. Ed. Nineham. (Blackwell, 1955; 30s.)

gospel records and setting it in the wider context of the forms of thought—the mythology—found throughout the New Testament. Not miracles only, but also the three-storied universe, nay, the very conception of salvation, all are presented in the New Testament as ideas unintelligible to the modern man: we must take them and recast them in contemporary terms. We must distinguish between the' historic' event which with eternal force makes its impact on us, and the 'historical', which is what actually happened. The first demands a decision, the second, it seems, is in the last resort irrelevant as well as inaccessible. Bultmann's massive learning and penetrating insight mean that we must take his challenge seriously, and they make him a formative influence for many, but few will accept his own answer to his challenge. Pure historicity may be an element in our material which no analysis can isolate; but this does not mean that we must liquidate it. Butlmann's historical scepticism is of course bound up with the work of Form-criticism, and this is perhaps the place to indicate the contemporary English attitude to this method of study: if we have been content in the past to see gospels as composed of units of tradition, distinguishable by their form into 'tale', 'pronouncement-stories', 'miracle-stories', or the like, we are now neither content to study the gospels only in this fragmentation, since their masterly synthesis is much clearer to us, nor to put off any longer this question: granted that the dress in which we now have these units owes much to the early Church and granted that some may be owed in entirety to that source, yet, since at least in some cases the original form cannot have differed in any important respect from the present form, must not Jesus himself have been one source, one direct source, for this tradition? If we accept this possibility, in view of all that we have been urging, we have to accept also the possibility that when Jesus is described as the Son of Man, the Messiah, God's 'beloved Son', the Servant of God, and so forth, it is ultimately because he himself believed that he was heir to these titles, and even that he believed this for the simple reason that these are the only titles which can describe him, because in fact he was the Son of God.

It is a happy and significant fact that Hoskyns' and Davey's *The Riddle of the New Testament*, published in 1931, is one of the relatively few comprehensive New Testament studies which still presents the reader with a live option, and that a remarkably acute work in this same tradition, R. H. Fuller's *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus*, can in 1954, after a careful historical study, meet Bultmann's challenge that we must demythologize the New Testament with the judgment 'that the Church's *kerygma*

is not an arbitrary interpretation imposed upon an arbitrarily selected stretch of history, but that it has an intelligible basis in that history, and in the mind of the chief participator in it'.[5]

If the student of the New Testament feels that in the sphere of synoptic criticism he lives in the midst of a rich and still ungathered harvest, much of it still beyond the reach of his eye, he will be no less delighted if he turns aside into the contiguous field of Fourth Gospel study. Here he can witness a very interesting reaction now just beginning: if in an extended review of Dodd's magnum opus, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel,* Bultmann has mournfully shaken his head over the Cambridge veteran's comparative conservatism in the amount of space he has assigned in the Johannine background to Hellenistic philosophy, gnostic dualism, and oriental myth, others on the other hand have begun increasingly to feel that the most valuable part of Dodd's work is that in which he illuminates the Old Testament influence, and are remembering with satisfaction a distinguished Jewish scholar's verdict that the Fourth Gospel is the most Semitic of them all. It has fallen with devastating and startling appropriateness to a very distinguished American Old Testament archaeologist writing in a volume of essays dedicated to congratulation of Prof. Dodd, to be perhaps the first in the era succeeding Dodd's own work to emphasize afresh the evidence for a Palestinian origin of at least some of the gospel's material.[6] It is doubtful nevertheless whether the tide of opinion will set quite in the direc tion taken by C. K. Barrett, who is content in a very up-to-date commentary with a theory of authorship hankering after a connexion beween the gospel and the son of Zebedee.

There is one sphere where much awaits to be done: we need still to assess the extent to which liturgical and homiletic practice may lie behind books of the New Testament. In a book every day winning more assent[7] Dr. Kilpatrick has shown the influence of homiletic practice on the gospel of St. Matthew; and the belief that the *First Epistle of St. Peter* is in origin a paschal liturgy, with a sermon delivered at the baptismal eucharist, may be the beginning of a new understanding of more books in the New Testament than merely this 'epistle'.

Again, we really do not know in what category to place the Epistle of St. James: is its intriguing reminiscence of teaching

[5] p. 117. Prof. Fuller's book was reviewed in the *Modern Churchman,* December, 1955.

[6] W. F. Albright in *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology.* Ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube. (C.U.P., 1956; 70s.)

[7] *The Origins of the Gospel according to S. Matthew.* (Oxford.)

like the Matthaean Sermon on the Mount to make us say, 'Here we have independent witness by the Lord's own brother to the Lord's ethical teaching' or, 'the work is therefore contemporary with the composition of Matthew and not with its sources'? And in the latter case who is 'James'? Dr. Kilpatrick has made clear that Matthew belongs to the period considerably after the fall of Jerusalem when the Christian synagogue was being forced into open hostility to the Jewish synagogue. Its eschatology emphasizes a word of comfort to the oppressed Church and a word of condemnation to the oppressors. The Epistle of St. James, in any case bearing several marks both of Hellenistic culture and of the later development of Church life, perhaps shares this outlook in its contrast of the careless rich with the Christian 'brethren.' But it would be rash to reach a premature conclusion on this debated work.

Yet again, we do not know what the First Epistle of St. John really is. Is it an 'epistle' or a tract by the mysterious author of the Fourth Gospel, and for whom was it written? Is it true that the tiny Third Epistle is, as Käsemann attractively argues, the key which begins the unlocking of the mystery of the identity of the author of both gospel and epistles? If he was the 'witness' *par excellence*, who was he in the historical context surrounding the Lord? Liturgical and related studies may help us in understanding some of the New Testament literature, but they are not the only master-keys; nevertheless, if we have found a key which unlocks one puzzle, we may be encouraged to believe that similar keys wait to be discovered.

All interpretation of the New Testament is inseparable from the interpretation of its background: for this reason no present trend of study is more important than the immense revival among scholars in the study of the ancient languages used by our Lord, his predecsssors, contemporaries, and successors in his own traditions and in the whole civilization of the Mediterranean. To assess the dates and influence of the Greek Old Testament, to understand the peculiar modes of thinking and the steadfastly held presuppositions of the Jewish scholars who in rendering Hebrew into the Aramaic necessary for their own day did more than change the language, or to appreciate the reason for a choice of word or phrase in rendering either Old or New Testament into the languages of those times and civilizations, all these very varied skills demand prolonged study, but reward the student with fascinating new perspectives of his material. When we set some famous text before us we are occupied with a three-dimensional datum: what preceded it will make it intelligible (and it goes

without saying that at any era New Testament study is inconceivable without Old Testament study); what follows will be illumined by it and often reflect back light upon it; yet often it will remain impossible fully to understand it without knowing something of the depth beneath it, the unseen riches in the mind of the writer. We have but to mention the Logos-doctrine of the Fourth Gospel, the theme of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the imagery of *Revelation*, to provide obvious literary illustrations, but to most the clearest example will be the original Aramaic form of the sayings of the Lord. The last thirty years has seen a retreat from the position that an Aramaic original underlies all the gospels (a position never held by very many) but a new careful and critical undertaking such as Prof. Black's *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* shows both how complicated are the problems, but also how illuminating is the enquiry. In spite of the difficulties inherent in the view that the evangelists used Aramaic materials, there are perhaps still some passages in the gospels and in the early chapters of Acts where a misunderstanding of an Aramaic original still offers the most convincing explanation of a difficulty.

More important even than the ability to understand some hitherto obscure passages of scripture is the general knowledge of the culture, inseparable from that of language, within which the Christian revelation is displayed. In this sphere far more remains to be done than has yet been achieved, and a body of knowledge is still being built up which will interpret our precious heritage more by equipping us with better attuned minds than by showing us merely external connexions between the parts of our material.

Some such result will attend the examination of the Qumran literature: it is true that until now at any rate there seems to be general agreement that scrutiny of the scrolls has not illumined New Testament theology in any important point whatsoever: but their value as throwing some light on the history of early Christianity, on its relation to Judaism, on the prevalence of sects with possible affinities on the one hand with what was later to be known as gnosticism, on the other with that early sect in Judaism whose adherents were first called Christians at Antioch, on the history of literary and theological interpretation, on the history of the text of the Old Testament, on the history and development of those Semitic languages whose importance I have emphasized—their value in these ways is likely to increase indefinitely. And when this historical study of them has advanced much further than it has so far, we may well find that they shed some light on New Testament conceptions, perhaps, for example, on those of the

Messiah and of the Holy Spirit; but they cannot ever do what the uninformed publicizers of them, chiefly in the cheaper press, seem to wish to imply: they cannot furnish evidence which will decide us either for saying, 'This is the truth about Christian claims—we now know what really happened and they are false!' or for saying, 'We now have independent evidence and can really believe Jesus was the Son of God'.

There is no way of knowing 'what really happened' nor is there any such thing as 'independent evidence' any more than there is such a person as an 'independent scholar'. Our quest for the historical Jesus begins with faith and ends with faith, for it has to rest not on an achievement of a picture of Jesus—who was indeed a historical person—but on a conviction which can be be clearly expressed as a historical statement: those who wrote about him whom we desire to know insisted at the same time and and with equal intensity upon his historicity as upon such deliberate lavishness of description as to exhaust their categories. They could not find the right words: as we study the use of those they found, we understand, and worship.

THE CHRISTIAN IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

By Rev. Canon L. John Collins, M.A., Canon of St. Paul's

I THINK it is fair to say that the influence of the Christian Church upon world affairs has been on the decline during the last three hundred years. And this decline has been rapidly accelerated during the last fifty years. In world affairs as a whole, it is true, the Roman Catholic Church has enjoyed a certain measure of increased political power during and immediately following upon the 1939-45 war; but, even so, its power and prestige has suffered considerably in countries of Eastern Europe and its influence in Italy, Germany and elsewhere in Western Europe would seem to be waning.

In Britain the decline is so marked as to be self-evident. The Church of England counts to-day for very little whether in the day to day political arena or in the general development of our modern way of life. The Free Churches, having apparently put aside their former prophetic rôle, are today as ineffective in their influence

upon our public life as is the Church of England. And the Roman Church, a minority mission Church in this country, exerts some influence on matters closely affecting the relationship of that Church to the other Churches in Britain, but on major issues would seem to have relatively as little influence as its rivals.

The reasons for this decline are, doubtless, many and varied; but I would like to draw attention to one factor which, in my opinion, has largely contributed towards it: this factor is the meaning which, in the life and thought of the Christian Church ever since that day in its history when Constantine decided to make the Christian religion the official religion of the Roman Empire, has been attached to the word 'Christian' by its identification with the word 'Churchman'—I am not thinking here in terms of the theological concept of 'Churchman', a member of the mystical Body of Christ; but in terms of its practical usage where it means a member of the visible and organised human counterpart of the mystical Body, a human machine subject to human sin and error, under whose human authority (however nearly conformed to the will of God, human none the less) in matters of faith and order he is disciplined.

There is, of course, a real sense in which, in terms of New Testament theology, we may speak of a Christian as necessarily a member of the Church and as a member of the Church as necessarily a Christian. But the Church of the New Testament is not a closely defined organisation. It is, rather, the community of those who believe themselves to be members of Christ and therefore members one of another, a mystical Body the outward form of which has little or no precise definition. On grounds of New Testament theology it would not be true, then, to insist that 'Churchman' and 'Christian' are synonymous, if by this we mean to imply that the organised and visible Christian church of history has taken the exact form and followed the precise practice of the Church of the New Testament, the form and pattern of which is falsely supposed to have been precisely defined.

For more than two centuries Christians were involved in a struggle to formulate their faith in terms of its significance for a way of life in this world—often an unseemly struggle in which it would seem to some that the palm of victory was not always to those who fought on the side of truth; for two centuries they strove to keep alight the flame of Christian faith in face of persecutions from without and of the disintegrating effects of factions within. It is not surprising, therefore, that the decision of Constantine, offering as it did an opportunity of peace and stability among Christians, seemed to be a great victory for the Gospel and to open the way for

a triumphant Church to bring the whole world under the sovereignty of God. Then and since then Christians have, generally speaking, regarded this event as the outstanding landmark in the history of the triumph of Christianity over heathenism. But I would suggest that we ask the question whether, particularly when seen in the light of subsequent history, it was not, after all, a disaster. For in endowing the Church with the sanctions of the temporal authority of the State it opened the way for ecclesiastical authority to insist upon an orthodox and unquestioned doctrine of the faith and order of the Church, to violate the consciences of individual Christians, to silence the voice of prophecy, and to mould the Christian pattern of life to conform to the needs and desires of the State.

Here then was the offer of peace and stability at the expense of freedom and integrity—an offer which the Church too readily accepted. Here was set the seal upon the growing tendency of whichever ecclesiastics found themselves in control to bind the Church in the chains of an authoritarian orthodoxy and so to put to flight the Holy Spirit. From that day to this the identification of 'Christian' with 'Churchman' has meant its identification with 'orthodox churchmanship' : to be a 'Christian' has been taken to mean an acceptance of all that is involved when the Church sustains itself under the sanctions of the State. And this identifying of the two words has therefore resulted in the substitution of the Sword for the Cross in the life and witness of the Christian communities.

But it is not only on grounds of what happened in history as a result of it that Constantine's decision needs to be seen as disastrous for Christianity. It is also because from that day onwards the Church was rooted in a lie, the untruthful proposition that the Church as ordered under Constantine was identifiable with a supposed well defined entity, the New Testament Church. The entry of such a lie into the heart of the Church meant that the question scarcely arose as to what is the proper function of the Church in its partnership with the State; and the obedient acceptance of ecclesiastical formulae and rites became a sufficient ground for anyone, however ill-conformed to the pattern of Christ and however lacking in intention of being so conformed, to become a Churchman.

In the Middle Ages the implications of this disaster to Christianity never became fully apparent. Indeed, it might have seemed that temporal power had been instrumental not only in preserving the Christian religion and the Christian way of life through the Dark Ages, but also in bringing the whole of life under the rule of

God. In the medieval Church there seemed to be no limit set to the exercise of Christian responsibility. The temporal power itself seemed to have been placed under the beneficent rule of God. But even at its best disaster was always present within the medieval Church. Just as in theory there was no limit set to the exercise of Christian responsibility so there was no limit set to the Church's lust for power, a power sustained in the final analysis, not by the Spirit, but by the Sword.

Under the impact of the Renaissance and of the Reformation, the medieval experiment, already weakened by its own internal corruptions and contradictions, collapsed. But unfortunately the disastrous consequences of the form of the marriage between Church and State effected by the supposed triumph of the Church over the Roman Empire survived. Despite the appearance here and there of the voice of prophecy, despite occasional rebellion by individuals and groups against authority whether of Church or State, despite the clamant and widespread assertion of the rights of the individual conscience and the authority of Scripture, despite all these things, with the breakdown of what is sometimes called the static conception of creation which was fundamental to medieval thought and practice and with the upsurge of the spirit of individualism, there remained the basic conception of Christendom : though the arrangements for an actual relationship of Church with State might differ as between this or that group of Christians, the vast majority of Protestants as well as of Roman Catholics continued to think of a Christian as a Churchman in that limited sense of the word 'Churchman' which had already become attached to it. That important question unasked at the time of Constantine of what is the proper rôle of the Church in any partnership with the State was still not asked, let alone answered. The Church continued, whether in Protestantism or in Romanism, to fuss about the form and order of the visible ecclesiastical organisation and to tie the Churchman to rigid definitions, rather than to think out what its proper function should be.

The breakdown of medievalism spelt the end of what we may term the age of dependance : it inaugurated the age of individualism. We might have expected, therefore, that the faults which had grown in the medieval Church as a result of the marriage between Church and State would have been corrected : for at its best the new age brought to men the hope of freedom from servile obedience to authority and released them from any 'acceptance' of a static feudal society. But, alas, the situation deteriorated : because the form of the marriage was not repudiated, the temper of cut-throat competition and the doctrine of laissez-faire, which were

common factors in the new situation, spread inside the Church and became part and parcel of a 'Christian' way of life. So, as the Roman Church fought a persistent rearguard action to regain temporal power, each Protestant Church sought to establish itself and to enhance its prestige by renouncing temporalities only in order to gain the protection of secular authority. Both tried to preserve the previously accepted principles of the marriage, the one by reactionary efforts at usurpation, the other by resigning temporal power in exchange for protection.

The split up of Christendom on the secular side into rival nations and groups and on the ecclesiastical side into rival churches led to the dreadful scandal of religious wars and persecutions. The Christian, still identified as a Churchman, found himself, no less than in the medieval Church, the wielder of the Sword in defence of what he was led to believe were his Christian convictions. Odd, it always seems to me, how little regard the Church has given to the saying of Jesus, 'They that take the sword shall perish with the sword'. The sword, the stake, and the rack remained the symbols of the Christian faith.

The scandal of so much bloodshed and cruelty in the name of Christ but, in fact, for the indulgence of the lust for power and the desire for protection led, in default of any attempt to correct the false principles upon which the relations between Church and State were regulated, to the growth of a false and hypocritical 'otherworldliness', an 'otherworldliness' of escapism from Christian responsibility in the temporal affairs of life. The desire of churchmen to enjoy the best of both worlds led, during the nineteenth century in particular, to that dangerous doctrine of the need to separate religion and politics—a doctrine which, under the guise of safeguarding the Churches from the degrading influences of political chicanery and expediency, is too often a cover under which the Church tries to preserve its own privileges and individual Churchmen to turn a deaf ear to any call for social and economic justice.

Like the medieval Church the Protestant churches have silenced the voice of Christian prophecy. There are occasions in history, and particularly in modern history, which stand out as noble exceptions. But too frequently the churches are to be found, not on the side of reform, but lined up with the forces of reaction against those who would endeavour to confront every situation, whether in Church or State, with the word of God. It is for this reason, I think, that the Protestant Churches to-day draw their support primarily from the middle classes.

The decline of Church influence in public affairs was inevitable because the Protestant Churches, as well as the medieval Church, failed to face up adequately to the question of what are the proper functions of the individual Christian and of the Churches in their relationships with the State. But before we seek to apply to our task all that we have so far considered, let me briefly note three characteristics of our contemporary society: first, it would seem (though we must be careful not to assume what is, for us, impossible historically to assess) that we are at the end of the age of individualism and at the beginning of a new age, the main characteristic of which may become interdependence. Be that as it may; it is clear that, under the influence of scientific development and industrial mass production, contemporary society is afraid, and is meeting its fears by what might be defined as the technique of 'togetherness'.

Secondly, contemporary society in the western world is bewildered. The Utopian dream of the last century has been shattered, individualism been assessed dangerous, and the Church deemed to be irrelevant except for the few who 'like that sort of thing'. Taught to need a plethora of material benefits, we find nevertheless that life has become too uncertain, too complicated, too rushed for there to be any deep satisfaction in material rewards. And for the majority there is no real or satisfying hope of any life to come. In such a situation men rush hither and thither wildly seeking after a sure foothold—Lo, here; Lo there is Christ. It is this characteristic of our age which, in all probability accounts for so many, particularly so many young people, seeking refuge in one or another form of authoritarianism.

A third characteristic to which I would draw attention is that of the growth of the influence of Asia and Africa in world affairs. Formerly it had been supposed that Christendom, with its so-called Christian civilisation, would ultimately absorb the rest of the world. But to-day the claims of western civilisation to be Christian are widely questioned; and the idea of an extended Christendom is not attractive to those who take pride in their own ancient traditions and religious convictions. In the world of the near future temporal power will, in all probability, be with the non-Christians —the Christian voice will be a minority voice, and unsupported politically by any but a fractional part of the total of world power. This must have a profound effect upon the exercise of Christian responsibility in world affairs.

I have chosen these three characteristics because I think they powerfully illustrate the tremendous difficulties which confront the

Christian to-day in any attempt he may make to live out in the world the Christian way of life. They offer a startling challenge to the Christian churches which they cannot meet unless they purge themselves of that basic weakness the results of which have already led to the decline of their influence in public affairs. A church which, for all its initial power and advantage, has so stifled the voice of Christian prophecy and so compromised with the world that to-day its influence in public life is well-nigh negligible can hardly be expected, unless it undergoes a drastic reformation of body and soul, to halt the decline of its influence and to make any serious contribution to the solution of the fresh problems which are being created in our contemporary society.

The first step towards the reformation which is required should be, I believe, to find a way to put back the Cross where it has been ousted by the Sword. We need to think out anew the meanings to be attached to the words 'Christian' and 'Churchman' in the context of responsibility in matters of government and of economic and social environment. We need to ask, and to try to answer afresh : What are the proper functions of the Church and of the individual Churchman in their relationships with the temporal powers that be? To this question then, let us address ourselves.

In the first place let us search the Scriptures—though our search for the purposes of this paper must necessarily be swift and sketchy. 'I am not come to destroy but to fufil' : those words suggest that we should do well to turn first to the Old Testament.

The Old Testament reveals the history of Israel as the story of the call and rejection by God of the Jewish people. They were called upon to be a people chosen by God through whom He might establish his reign of justice over the whole earth. Under the covenant made with Abraham He for his part undertook to be faithful to promises if they, on their part, would remain faithful and obedient to Him. But they were a rebellious and a disobedient people, so that God rejected them, except for a Remnant which should be saved. And in this story it is the prophets who play the most significant rôle : their part was to confront the people and their rulers with the word of God so as to convict them of sin, to show them the consequences of disobedience to God's word, to call upon them for repentance and amendment, and to declare the loving kindnesses and the mercies of the Lord. And this prophetic word was spoken, not in abstract, but to actual situations in which the people and their rulers found themselves in their ordinary everyday life—as David, Ahab and others learnt to their cost. But the key to an understanding of the prophetic ministry in the Old

Testament is in the words of Moses, 'Would that all the Lord's people were prophets'.

In the Old Testament, then, the people of God (at first identified with the whole nation and later with only a Remnant) had the special task assigned them of showing forth that pattern of society in which the rule of God operates over the whole of human life. And in this society every person was called upon, each in his own sphere, to be a prophet. For the Old Testament, then, the function both of the individual and of the corporate society is the prophetic one of openly declaring the unchanging word of God as it affects not only the whole of history but also each and every particular situation in human life. For it, the whole of life, the whole of history, is under the providence of God : the proposition that religion should not interfere in politics has no support in the Old Testament.

But according to the New Testament, the Christians are heirs of the promises : the Church is the ecclesia of God, the Remnant which should be saved. What, then, is true of the people of God in the Old Dispensation is true of the people of God in the New. The Church must perform that same prophetic ministry which Israel refused to perform; and the individual Christian, like the individual prophet of old, is called upon to proclaim the word of God in every situation in which he finds himself by virtue of his place in history. And because of the Incarnation that word which he declares is now given clear form—it is, so to speak, clothed upon by the life, the teaching, the death and the Resurrection of Jesus.

The conception of the Church as a body concerned only with another world and with the personal salvation of individuals, and the supposition that Christians and the Church may legitimately compromise with the values and standards of this world because their main concern is with the next, are wretched misinterpretations of the Gospel. There is a genuine element of 'otherworldliness' about the Christian faith without which Christianity loses itself in Utopianism; but this genuine 'otherworldliness' involves Christians in more, not less, responsibility in the here and now of this life.

A turning to the Scriptures gives, then, a clear pointer as to what are the proper functions of the Church and of the individual Churchman in their relationships with temporal powers. First the Church must itself be a pattern in the world of what a society which confronts itself with the word of God should be like. That human sin and error will always make this impossible of proper achievement does not release the Church from its obligation of seeing that the world is given a signpost set in the right direction. Secondly,

the Church should provide that proper milieu in which Christians should learn what is the true prophetic word they must utter to this or that situation, and in which they should be nurtured and encouraged to fulfil their prophetic ministry—as a member of the Body the Churchman is able to safeguard himself against the danger of excessive reliance upon his own spiritual power and his own subjective judgment. And thirdly, whereas the ordinary individual Christian must prophesy in those situations in which he himself is involved, the Church as the Body of Christ must proclaim the prophetic word in all those situations over which the individual as such has little or no direct control.

If these be the proper functions of Christians and Churches, the decline of influence of the Anglican Church—for the remainder of this paper I speak, as an Anglican, of the Anglican Church—can scarcely be wondered at. For the decline is not the result of the State rejecting her on account of her prophesying—she has, on the contrary been proud to support and to rely upon the power of the temporal sword : for her there has been no Cross as the price of her faithfulness to God, but only privilege as the reward of her silence in face of pretensions and evils in the State. Her decline is the result of her desire to get the best of both worlds and of her failure, through compromise, of getting the best of either.

It would be foolish to pretend that the Anglican Church as at present constituted continues to seek for or to hope for any increase of temporal power : but, by remaining loyal to that lie which we have seen to have been planted into the heart of the Church as a result of the decision of Constantine (that lie which has led to the substituting of the Sword for the Cross in defence of the faith) she seeks rather to be left in peace, supposing that a concentration upon purely ecclesiastical affairs, and upon a tightening up of ecclesiastical discipline, will release her from her proper responsibilities in the social, economic and political realms of life.

So concerned is the Anglican Church to-day to deny its proper function vis-à-vis the State, so scared is it of prophecy, that it now bases its actions upon the ridiculous doctrine that the Church must not, in matters of public interest, be ahead of public opinion. The late Archbishop of York, Dr. Garbett, justified the inaction of the Church in face of the decisions of the British Government to make and test hydrogen bombs by reference to this un-Christian doctrine. And the Archbishop of Canterbury has made it the basis of his pronouncements on the question of the death penalty for murder. And in its approach to nearly every important contemporary issue the Church is motivated by this same enervating doctrine.

Another and kindred error rampant within the Church to-day is the pretence that failure to prophesy and inaction in the face of evil are evidences of the exercise of Christian patience. Patience understood in the sense that we ought not to be anxious and that, having done what is required of us as Christians, we leave the matter in the hand of God, patience so understood is indeed a Christian virtue. But that is not the sort of patience which is meant when we are told that 'things are not really so bad' and that 'given time all will be well'. The sort of patience which is characteristic of the Church to-day stands condemned, I think, under the judgment of biblical theology. The Christian should be impatient to rid the world of every evil, impatient to come to the aid of the oppressed and the needy.

But not only does the Church to-day fail to prophesy : it also decries any of its members who, refusing to toe the party line, insist upon trying as individual churchmen to fulfil their rôle as prophets. Of course, not everyone who prophesies is a true prophet. But there is a dishonesty in the leadership of the Church which, while decrying and besmirching those individuals who strive to bring the prophetic word to bear realistically upon actual situations, claims for its policy of 'patience' harvests which could not have been gathered but for their witness. For many in the leadership of the churches to-day public revelations of 'scandalons', inside or outside the Church, are regarded as dishonourable, whereas 'behind the scene' backbiting and besmirching, secret stabbings in the back, are seemingly thought to be legitimate and in keeping with our Christian profession of faith.

In 1946 a Bishop said to me 'Do you realise that the Church of England is not approaching the precipice : it is already over it'. Such a statement, whether accurate or not, suggests that in 1946 there was some hope of the Church being ready to welcome that reformation of body and soul, the urgent need for which we have noted. But, alas, to-day that hope is dimmed : for a new and facile optimism has arisen among our leadership. It is true that ecclesiastical statistics suggest that Church attendances are increasing and more candidates for confirmation and ordination are offering themselves to the Church ; it is true also that the administration of the Church is improving and reorganisation schemes are successfully carried out ; and it is true that central authority is slowly but surely establishing a discipline which seems to be effective : but is it true that all these 'advances' really mean the Church is any more alive than it was in 1946? Only a careful analysis of the reasons for these 'improvements' and of their effects upon the life of the Church and nation could enable us to answer that question

truthfully—and I, for one, suspect that such an analysis would dash the facile optimism to pieces.

How, then, are we to effect a reformation of the Church, how are we to put back the Cross in the place of the Sword? This question I have neither the time nor the competence to answer. But I would like to suggest where a beginning might be made.

In my opinion the greatest hindrance to-day to any such reformation as we have in mind is the present control of the Church by a centralized bureaucracy. Bureaucracy and centralized administration are always a menace to personal relationships: but what we may call 'machinitis' in the Church, the very purpose of which ought to be to uphold the full dignity of human persons made in the image of God and the pre-eminence of right personal relationships, is a disease, the results of which could be disastrous. It were better to have the freedom in the Church for prophets to prophesy falsely and for rebels to defy authority, than, having discipline and good administration, to still the voice of prophecy: better to save the soul of the Church and to kill its body than, having a well-groomed and well disciplined body, to kill the soul.

Let me add a brief postscript: I believe it would repay us to think out the significance for the Christian Church of a biblical doctrine of Rejection. For myself I cannot rid my mind of the gloomy possibility that, as God rejected the Israel of the Old Dispensation, so may he reject, or indeed may already have rejected, the Church.

THE PROSPECTS BEFORE LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY!

By the Rev. C. O. Rhodes, M.A., Director and Secretary of the Modern Churchmen's Union, Editor of the *Church of England Newspaper*

SINCE last autumn I have spent all the time that could be spared travelling the country, visiting all kinds of communities and training establishments connected with the Church of England. The intention of this paper is to pass on some of the reflections and thoughts that have come out of this piece of research.

Among the most interesting places on the list were the Anglo-Catholic communities. The tour included the Society of the Sacred Mission at Kelham, the Society of St. John the Evangelist (the Cowley Fathers), the Society of St. Francis at Cerne Abbas, the Order of St. Benedict at Nashdom and the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield. One of several reasons that directed me

to these centres of Anglo-Catholicism was a warning I had received that, after South India, it would be almost as much as my life was worth to be found in any of them. If that were so, it seemed all the more necessary to go. By this time the Anglo-Catholic communities were declaring themselves in favour of the resolutions of the Convocations. Surely hard thoughts could be put to sleep. However, no warning could have been wider the mark. We had much discussion of South India but never in quarrelsome mood. Everywhere the project of explaining descriptively what was happening in other traditions received the warmest of welcomes. Nowhere was there the slightest hint of partisan suspiciousness or unpleasant feeling. This seemed to me far more than the conventional hospitality of the monastery, which is so justly famous. The impression I carried away was that the people I had met did not want to be regarded as a separated group, going their own way in despite of others. There was an eagerness to find common ground and genuine pleasure at being presented with any kind of instrument for establishing contact. The notion prevalent in some circles that they think of themselves as strangers and sojourners in the Church of England, with a prior loyalty elsewhere, does not contain even a modicum of truth.

In some Roman Catholic circles there is a disposition to deprecate the mind of such a community as Nashdom as clinging to ancient ways that the more advanced elements of Roman Catholicism itself are steadily abandoning. Among ourselves there is a tendency to think of them as aping Rome. I must say here that, apart from its aesthetic fascination, the abiding memory I took away from Nashdom was an impression of authenticity. This was not mimicry or puppetry; it was the genuine article, existing in its own right. Looking at the matter from the standpoint of the centuries rather than from that of the immediate politics of ecclesiasticism, if, in the passage of generations, there is, against all present probability, to be any better understanding between Protestantism and Rome, would it not be altogether good that we should have in the Church of England a group of dedicated men who can mediate to us what is most valuable in the central core of the Roman Catholic Tradition? It is important to distinguish between responsible and scholarly men such as these and the disgruntled fanatics of the Annunciation Group with their juvenile game of ecclesiastical politics. They are not by any means to be confused.

One point that struck me in the Presidential address was the acknowledgement that on the deeper levels of theology there is

much in common between the Catholic and the Liberal. In the heat of controversy we have been apt to overlook this. We repudiate their authoritarianism; we detest their legalism; we want to advance on their traditionalism but, what in the future may be even more important, we share their reverence for intellect and reason.

We must continue with the tour. My peregrinations were not confined to monasteries. They included a number of theological colleges. I have visited the homes of conservatism at Oak Hill and the London College of Divinity. I have been also to Ripon Hall; University College, Lampeter; Lincoln; Ely; Kelham and Mirfield; St. Aidan's College, Birkenhead; St. John's College, Durham; and the Theological Faculty at Manchester University. Two of these, of course, are the responsibility of communities already mentioned. In this way I covered about a third of the existing colleges and the selection was, I hope, a fairly representative one both as regards churchmanship and other characteristics.

Here, again, I can have nothing but gratitude for the friendly warmth with which I was received, and for the open frankness with which all my questions were treated. And if some were very obviously better equipped and better placed than others, none of them seemed to me to be definitely bad. That does not mean that all is well with the training of ordinands. It would be grotesque to say so. Whether the segregation of ordinands into compact little communities of thirty or forty men is the best preparation for the ministry is open to question.

It is quite obvious that some of these tiny colleges, situated in remote places, cannot possibly provide a staff that can cope adequately. Some of them, battling gallantly with difficulties and doing fine work in spite of them, have really no *raison d'être* as separate institutions at all. Yet some of my worst fears were quite definitely falsified. There seemed everywhere to be a happy atmosphere and the best possible relationships between students and staff. Still, the doubt remains. Would it not, from every standpoint, be an improvement if our twenty-eight theological colleges were grouped into, say, half-a-dozen large establishments, situated near university centres? The optimum size for any training institution seems to be about 200 or 250 students. That provides for adequate staffs and the benefits of size without the disadvantages of over-growth. As for location, it is really quite absurd that colleges should be put down in remote cathedral villages, as eight of them are, where they can draw upon no intellectual resources other than a handful of superannuated canons can provide, while a university such as Manchester, with a fine theological

faculty, is virtually deserted by the Anglican Church. Why do we ignore the able professors paid by the State in favour of mediocrities paid out of our own funds? Our present system is wasteful both financially and intellectually. That it has any advantages from the standpoint of the spiritual development of young men is hard to believe. The root of the trouble is that the vanity of ancient cathedral centres must be satisfied and every variant shade of churchmanship must have its own little centre of learning.

There have been too many young men, including some of the ablest, whose first disillusion with the Church has been the sterility of their theological training. It is bad that this should be so.

Generally speaking, principals of colleges spoke highly of their students, who they thought were of rather better quality than those entering the Ministry a few years ago. Comparing them with the recruits of previous generations, they include fewer men of academic learning and more practical men. There may be much to be said for this change provided the Ministry retains a strong academic leavening. But the more noticeable difference is the mixture of social types. Recruits nowadays come from every social stratum. The criticism that the lower middle and working classes are not adequately represented no longer holds good. More and more men are coming in from industry. Many of these have held responsible positions and some have shown promise of satisfactory and lucrative careers.

There have recently been expressions of concern about the high proportion of these men with extremist views, particularly of the fundamentalist type. One or two colleges where this might have been expected were not included in my list. But several strongly Evangelical colleges were, and in these I made a point of looking for this extremism. Of course it is difficult to make direct enquiries in a short time. Asking a man, 'Are you still as obscurantist as ever?' is rather like asking him, 'Have you stopped beating your wife?' A sudden burst of questions about theology would not necessarily reveal very much of the spirit behind the answers. This, however, can be said: I encountered none of the bigotry anticipated. Conservatism there was in plenty and, as might be expected of young men, they seemed much too sure that they possessed the final answers to the most baffling problems of our times. Some of the principals were kind enough to arrange for me to meet informally with discussion groups and lead the talk where and how I pleased. Nothing that came out of this was such as to give cause for serious anxiety. There is all the difference in the world between a man who accepts the critical approach to Holy Scripture as valid but who reaches a conservative conclusion and the old-fashioned

kind of embittered authoritarianism. As liberals we can respect the one : the other we cannot. The staffs were obviously trying to encourage the scholarly approach. There was, in addition, at least an awareness of the urgent problem of communication and of the need to find ways of integrating the Faith with the contemporary situation. If anything, there seemed to be more thought on these lines among the conservative colleges than elsewhere. Unless our liberalism is confined to the dogmatic assertion of our own theological conclusions, surely we ought to welcome all this and look for friends in those quarters. Some Fundamentalism there will always be in every religious movement. That hardened and fanatical authoritarianism is a psychological necessity for some people : but I concluded that there is probably no more of it among the young men coming into the Ministry now than there has ever been, and there may be less. Rumours of a new and powerful upsurge from the depths that might easily swamp the Church of England can safely be dismissed. They are myths.

Besides the communities and colleges, a third kind of institution is the teachers' training college. I visited the College of St. Mark and St. John, Chelsea; Trinity College, Carmarthen; St. Katherine's, Liverpool; St. John's, York, and Ripon College. It is an encouraging experience to come across an enterprise of the Church that commands whole-hearted and unreserved approval. So much of our planning is ill-conceived, so much effort misdirected, so much good work reduced in value by lack of money and manpower. But the training colleges open up the most promising line of advance. They rival in importance the theological colleges themselves. With admirable foresight the Church Assembly has made large funds available for their improvement and expansion and they also, of course, draw on the resources of the State. Because their staffs are taken from the teaching profession the manpower question does not arise.

Even if the Church of England were unable to maintain its schools, this need not cause serious anxiety while the training colleges are prospering. At present they train about a quarter of the teachers for the primary and secondary modern schools. The period of residence is two years, but it is to be increased to three. On leaving the students take up appointments in the Local Education Authority schools as well as the Church Schools. This means that they are diffused through almost the whole education system of the country and exercise an influence upon it. In some respects these colleges can be regarded as the finest evangelistic agency we have. Among the students who come, the larger proportion have little religious background, if any. Should they ultimately become

out-and-out Christians, it is not the consequence of some rip-roaring emotion-rousing campaign, but of gradual spiritual growth in the environment of a worshipping community. Surely this is the best way, and I was given an amplitude of evidence that it works. In the strategy of the spirit the principals, chaplains and staffs of these colleges are in a strong position. They are not unaware of the fact.

There are two ways of tackling the education issue. The Roman Catholics have chosen one of them. It is to be hoped that we shall never be persuaded by their obvious and superficial successes into emulating them. The Holy Roman Church is not the Church of England, and what may be good medicine for them may be disastrous for us. We may reasonably doubt whether it is good for them in the long run. The Roman Catholic way is to construct an educational system within the national system based upon schools that are sharply distinguished from the rest. The consequence is the development of a community within the community sharply distinguished from it. Because of this clearly drawn distinction the influence of the Roman Catholics on the rest of the nation is negligible. They have their own ethos and mores, their own approach to life, their own free-masonry among themselves, and they count for little.

But the Church of England cannot do that without being untrue to its name and its tradition. That is the authoritarian and sectarian way. The Church of England is what its name says, the Church of the nation. Its business in life is not to stand apart from the nation as a separated people, but to enter into its affairs and speak to it from within. The Roman Catholic way sets up a We-They relationship between the rest of the community and themselves which, so the sociologists tell us, always results either in hostility or indifference. In order to exercise a favourable influence it is essential to be recognized and accepted as ' one of ourselves '.

Perhaps the gravest mistake the Church of England is making at the present time is gradually to retreat from that relationship. The tendency is to withdraw from society, to set up barriers around the Church, to exclude and set at a distance. It may be that this is a spontaneous reaction to society's loss of interest in the Church : but, as so often, the obvious and immediate reaction is the wrong one. The roads of the modern world and of the Church have diverged : but instead of accelerating along its own curve the Church should be doubling across country to re-establish contact. What is the consequence of the present trend? A new kind of Church is growing up outside the nominal Church. It is a Church with a humanitarian ethic and an ideal of welfare,

financed mainly by industry and the State. The priests of the modern age are the doctors, the probation officers and magistrates, the personnel managers, psychologists and educationists. In practical affairs and in relation to personal salvation, it comes much nearer to actualizing the idea of a Christian Church than our own Church of England, or any other of the denominations has done for several centuries. Under contemporary conditions, it is fulfilling the same kind of function that the Mediaeval Church did in the different kind of society that it served. But it is a Church without worship and without a theology. It is a Church with limbs and nerves intact but without a mind or a heart. Hence the grievous problems that are besetting us.

That the conventional Churches can never again resume this function is about as certain as anything can be. What they should aim at is to supply the missing mind and heart to this new priesthood. By so doing it will be reintegrated into the social organism as an indispensable part of it, so that people will wonder how they ever came to think they could be without it. At present, half-hearted attempts are being made to tackle this question. The William Temple College at Rugby is the outward and visible sign of the Church's slightly disturbed conscience. But at the moment the great hope lies in the training colleges. These are the best instrument so far devised for re-establishing contact with the contemporary world. Most other efforts, in fact I would go so far as to say 'all', are tentative and experimental and half-hearted. Factory chaplaincies, for instance, are no more than a token payment of the Church's obligation to industry. The training colleges are on a large enough scale to be taken seriously and they are making an impact.

There are twenty-six of them, and I was able to visit no more than five. They are of various shades of churchmanship. It is possible that one or two boards of governors use their authority for partisan purposes. That is inevitable. In the nature of things they are too mixed up with the secular situation to be a reactionary influence. I carried on my enquiries about the alleged Fundamentalist revival. Once again, I could find no signs of it. Strangely, this seems to be more of a problem in the Local Education Authority colleges, some of which I went to see in the course of my quest. One principal of an L.C.C. college spoke of the bad effect a Fundamentalist conversion seems to have on students. Their spiritual and intellectual development stops dead and they become an irritant to their lecturers and tutors. At the worst, however, the problem is numerically very small. Fundamentalism is always confined to numerically negligible groups, and even the

Billy Graham campaigns at the height of their influence made no appreciable difference. It may be that in the L.E.A. colleges a certain amount of Fundamentalism is a spontaneous reaction to a secularist environment. Its easy, clearly defined, neat and dogmatic answers to all problems, including the problems of conduct; its facile promises of personal self-mastery; its convenient transference elsewhere of neurotic guilt; its appeal to vanity by the claim to divine favouritism: all this provides an imposing defence against attack from every side. In the prison house of his illusions the Fundamentalist is safe. In most of the Church colleges questions about Fundamentalism were greeted with raised eyebrows, as if they were rather irrelevant and foolish. It was from the headquarters of the movement that I heard the secret. Fundamentalism is not a problem in a Christian environment. Generally speaking there is no problem of Fundamentalism at all, but only a problem of ignorance. Where young people are properly taught and can enjoy an atmosphere of spiritual freedom and meaningful worship, they find deeper foundations for their security that are strong enough to bear the spiritual and intellectual structures they wish to raise upon them.

What conclusions emerge from all this visiting and talking and discussion? Obviously these Anglo-Catholics, Conservatives, middle-of-the-road men, of all shades and colours and none, are not suddenly going to turn into good and enlightened Modernists. But the atmosphere is not entirely unfavourable. Probably it is much happier from our standpoint than it was in the late 'thirties and after, when even William Temple reluctantly thought the time had come to roll up his 'Christian map of the world'. As to how the prospect looks in the field of theology is for theologians to say, and it is not for me to rush in where the angels so notoriously fear to tread. Perhaps Temple understood better than some how deeply theological thinking is affected by the psychological climate of the times. It has been natural during the past forty years for theology to reflect the bewilderment and despair that so many people experienced. Once more the natural and spontaneous response was the wrong one; and theology offered to the world nothing but a gospel of gloom and despondency at the very moment when what it needed from the Church was a steadying and encouraging influence. After all, we did not have to wait until the Battle of the Somme to learn that the peoples of Europe sometimes have fits of lunacy, and we did not have to wait until 1933 to discover that nations, as well as individuals, sometimes pass through dark nights of the soul. If theology could not ride these storms, the fact does not speak well for theology. As we

begin to pass into a new period, we find theologians mainly confined to taking in each others' washing. They are certainly having little influence outside their own clique. Most of what is written in this field passes through my hands. There is scarcely any that I feel I ought to read and practically none that I must read because of the light it sheds on human life and destiny or because it may provide new strength for my newspaper. If that is so for me, what can be recommended to the editors and columnists of the *Daily Mirror* or the *Daily Express* or the *Evening Standard*? Where is theology leading us except in academic circles? It is the psychologists and social thinkers nowadays who are the interpreters and prophets.

There are not lacking signs that the climate may be changing again, and we should not be far wrong if we took the death of Stalin as the crucial date. It is to be hoped that the theologians will respond and will be able to provide the vision for which men will look. Meanwhile, on the personal level we shall find churchmen on both sides of us glad to establish contact and not at all unfavourably disposed towards our aims. In practical matters we shall find, for instance, that by no means all Anglo-Catholics take the rigid attitude to marriage. So far as canon law is concerned, in all my wanderings I have not met a single person who has seriously wanted it; not one who would throw his hat in the air and shout, Hurrah for the draft canons! Occasionally someone has shown willingness to acquiesce in them, but nobody has been enthusiastic. The more strongly we act in that matter the more support we shall have. We should also remember that we are committed to the policy of reunion and in that, too, we shall have many colleagues who are working for the same objective.

In the end, the prospect for liberal Christianity does not depend upon what happens within the Church, but on the liberal approach to the spiritually hungry masses outside it. Can we provide the food that they will no longer accept from orthodox hands? Even as we seek the answer, we have to work for the kind of Church in which those masses can feel at home. We shall always have to fight on two fronts. Then what kind of a situation are we facing and what kind of a Church do we need to meet it?

Since the war the Church of England has recovered a little lost ground, but our Easter communicants are not yet anywhere near the 1939 figure. At the present rate of progress they will not reach that for about ten years. Other denominations can tell a similar sad story. Not all our efforts seem to make any appreciable difference. Great diocesan missions, united appeals, commando campaigns, calls to worship: they do no more than give a spiritual

shot-in-the-arm to existing congregations. Judged by its own declared intentions even the Billy Graham crusade, with all the devices of modern propaganda to aid it, must be accounted a failure. It was to have initiated a great wave of religious revival, spreading over the entire nation. In the event, it started no more than a ripple that quickly died away. Not by any test did it begin to rival, either relatively or absolutely, the results of such enterprises as those of Moody and Sankey in the last century, who had nothing to rely upon except the power of their own voices.

Yet leading men assure us that all is well. Our churches, they tell us, are not half-empty but half-full. Numbers are few but quality is good. We are turning the corner; God's word will not return to Him void; and so on. I am reminded of the retort of a curate to the vicar who was rallying his drooping spirits with the assurance that, if nobody else attended Mass, at least the angels were there in force. 'But,' objected the curate, 'the angels are so mean when the collection plate goes round.' If we are tired of diagnosis and of statistics, we are not less nauseated with facile evasions and feeble escapism. One grain of realism is worth a ton of excuses. The fact is that wherever technological civilization takes root, spiritual religion is undermined. That is not a peculiarly British, nor European, phenomenon but, in spite of the exciting statistics coming over from the United States, a world-wide one. No matter how encouraging in some respects are reports from Russia, South India, China and Japan, regarded as proportions of population, the progress of the Churches there is very, very small indeed. It is said that the great religions of the East are not untouched by icy blast.

Without entering into prolonged discussion of the reasons, it seems as if saturation with modern technology brings about a change in the structure of the human personality, rendering it incapable of responding to *any* presentation of the supernatural. This is not a question of the will or the desire to respond, but of a psychological incapacity. At lunch the other day I heard a clergyman insisting to our President that the men he encountered in the City were not in the least worried by the intellectual problems of religion: their difficulty was that they could not face its moral challenge and turned away from it. This kind of explanation is often made. Unfortunately it does not even possess the interest of being untrue. It is merely irrelevant. Were that the whole story the Billy Graham technique of dynamiting a breach in the moral defences would work like a charm. The fact is that the larger proportion of these men are no more capable of reacting to the orthodox presentation of the Gospel than they are of bending their

elbows backwards. The question is far from being merely one of vocabulary, important though that is. 'O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us!' What can such a phrase as that possibly mean to a flat dweller in Pimlico, his horizon bounded by other blocks of flats, his firmament filled with electric cables, cut off from the earth by asphalt, brought up on science fiction? What can the glorious phrases of the *Te Deum* convey to him? The words are simple enough: it is the whole concept that is alien to him. The Church organizes visiting parties to call upon him and he stands blankly at the door, listens uncomprehendingly to the invitation, accepts the leaflets handed to him and turns back to his T.V. without so much as a word of greeting. It is not the visitor who is at fault: he never has a chance. There are churches in London that have organized street visits on a large scale without gaining a single response. That is the situation, and there is no easy answer to it. The question is not whether *liberal* Christianity has any prospect, but whether any kind of religion at all can look forward. Let us not stop short, however. More than 50 per cent. of these Pimlico men are not members of any kind of club or organization, never join in the hearty backchat of a good public house, do not watch games, never attend a political or trade union branch meeting, scarcely ever visit the cinema and only read the headlines of the daily newspaper. This is not imagination but established fact. In outer suburbia the situation looks at first sight rather better: but closer examination brings disappointment. Take a random sample of Subtopians, and it is unlikely to include many church-people.

What kind of a church can meet this situation with any hope of success? Exactly the opposite, I should say, of the kind now visualized by the leadership of the Church. A certain degree of administration is good and necessary: but the Church of England looks like being administered out of existence. Law and order, also, are, up to a point, good and necessary: but beyond that point they become an obstruction and a curse. Generally speaking, the sphere of law is the material: the higher we rise in the moral and spiritual realm, the less valuable and the more dangerous law becomes. In dealing with the spiritual, the less law we have the better. Our leaders seem frightened to death of chaos and anarchy. Why? Within reasonable limits there is much to be said for anarchy and chaos. In any case, the right way of coping with religious anarchy is not by law but by prophecy. A church that falls back upon law is a degenerate church. The problem before the Church is appalling in its profundity and magnitude. It calls for the employment of every spiritual resource. The present preoccupation

with the minutiae of law and order looks far too much like an escape from it to be healthy. Indeed, some of the reasons for it officially given are almost an admission of this.

Above all, we need a flexible Church. That condition is hardly met by the proposal that we should have a committee in permanent session for the revision of our laws and liturgies. All that this proposal promises is a dog-fight every time an issue of principle is raised. Nor is the condition satisfied by the idea of Church Courts, however liberally they may operate. Stripped of explanations and pretences, these are to be machines for the exclusion from the Church of people like Bishop Barnes. What other purpose could they have? It is difficult to see how the Church can move out to meet new types of thinking, new popular media and new waves of feeling if everybody who in the least oversteps the territory circumscribed by authority is automatically hailed before a Court whose members, by virtue of their office, are bound to be conformist and conventional. The Church is not being prepared for a time of crisis, but of comfort and strength. Our leaders would do better if they would stop thinking of the Church as like a mighty army and think of it instead as a happy band of pilgrims. The last thing on earth we want the Church to be like is an army, as I am sure every soldier would agree.

If we must use military metaphors, we may with more usefulness compare the Church to a band of guerilla fighters, loosely disciplined, rich with initiative, ready to explore any possibility and take all kinds of risks, able to take advantage of the smallest opening and react immediately to every change. The Church is not an army of occupation in enemy territory, but the tendency is to make it look like that. We shall make no progress by trying to impose some sort of Christian ethos on the people. We shall only progress by identifying ourselves with them. This kind of identification cannot be organized or administered into existence. It can only come as the result of a long process of growth.

In visiting the theological colleges, I was impressed by the differences between them and the variety of thought and experience they represented. No doubt, each would encourage a special way of conducting services and guiding the pastoral work of the parishes. While remaining at one in our loyalty to our Saviour, we should try to develop that potential wealth. Then we can meet the infinite variety of human nature. The dark corners of society that one cannot touch another will be able to explore and illumine.

THE DANGERS AND WEAKNESS OF ROMAN CATHOLIC PROPAGANDA TO-DAY

By the Rev. R. P. C. Hanson, D.D.,
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I

'We frequently see inquisitive and restless spirits take refuge from their own scepticism in the bosom of a Church which pretends to infallibility, and, after questioning the existence of a Deity, bring themselves to worship a wafer.'

THESE words of Macaulay could apply well to our day. The intellectual climate of our time is not favourable to reasonableness. Extremes of opinion are to-day readily adopted in all milieux. In philosophy the Logical Positivists are making many disciples, men who reduce our possibility of knowing truth to a minimum, indeed reduce it beyond a minimum. And in contrast to these but illustrating the same law of extremes in movement of opinion, those who do not join the school which holds that we can believe almost nothing of what our fathers did are often induced to join the school which holds that we must believe a great deal more than our fathers ever believed—the Roman Catholic Church. Men either completely reject all the usual grounds of belief or they accept wholesale the most fantastic dogmas; the agnosticism and the credulity may be connected by some subtle psychological thread.

The Roman Catholic Church claims to be the only true Church. She declares that there can be only one Church, that to envisage the existence of separate denominations each of which may be a part of the true Church is to contradict the whole Christian conception of the Church; that as she is the only, or the largest, or even, one sometimes suspects, the noisiest candidate for this position of sole true Church she must be returned unopposed to this position and recognized as the only legitimate Catholic Church. And in accordance with this conviction she uses the word 'Catholic' in the most indiscriminate manner. There is not only Catholic doctrine and Catholic priesthood; there are Catholic scouts and Catholic vestments, and there is even, I believe, such a thing as Catholic courtship, a phrase that opens

fascinating possibilities which are, I fear, irrelevant to this paper. I know one hotel in the West of Ireland where on a Saturday evening the guests are asked if next morning they will have a Catholic or a Protestant breakfast. The Catholic breakfast is a late one for those who have first been to Mass; the Protestant breakfast is an earlier one for those who lie in bed a little later, but who do not go out to church before breakfast, relying on the doctrine of justification by faith.

But though this claim to be the sole true Church can sometimes appear to be similar to the claim that the man who blows his own trumpet loudest must be the finest character, it is in fact more serious than that, because at first sight it looks as if it has good support in the New Testament. The New Testament does stress very strongly the oneness of the Church, and it does not seriously envisage the existence of more than one Church. Just as it does not allow for a society where there are multitudes of purely nominal Christians, so it does not allow for a state of affairs where the Church is internally divided into different denominations, none of which can produce convincing evidence of being the exclusively true Church, but none of which can reasonably be regarded as heretical or schismatic bodies. This is the fact upon which the Roman Church relies for the effectiveness of its propaganda. It emphasizes strongly the oneness of the Church in the New Testament; it skates very gingerly over the history of the next four centuries; it comes out very strongly in pointing to the unity of the Church for the next thousand years; and it lays the whole responsibility for the break of unity at the Reformation on the other Christian denominations. That during the course of this history at least three Popes were involved in heresies condemned soon after their appearance by Ecumenical Councils; that between 1378 and 1414 it is impossible for any unprejudiced historian to avoid the conclusion that the indivisible was divided and that the break of unity in the sixteenth century was only the culmination of a process which had been maturing for centuries and for which the mediaeval Papacy must bear a large share of blame—these are all truths which it is not difficult for propaganda to obscure.

This claim to be the one true Church the Roman communion supports by presenting to the rest of Christendom a remarkably convincing appearance of outward uniformity and by persistently claiming that her doctrine is a single, vast, well-integrated and logically ordered system, so consistent in all its parts that it cannot afford to dispense with even the smallest doctrine without impairing the whole, and so closely-knit and organically inter-

dependent that there can be no question of distinguishing within it between essential and non-essential doctrines. Apparently the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, about which St. Bernard of Clairvaux was so invincibly ignorant, is as important a doctrine as the divinity of Christ, and the Corporeal Assumption as much a matter of revelation as that Jeus died for our sins, even though the Church has experienced an unaccountable delay of two thousand years in making this discovery. This exclusive claim on the part of the Roman Church is enhanced by the well-instructed state of their lay people, who are usually very well informed about the claims of their own Church. They defend their views with vigour and conviction and with a violence of language which often surprises the hazy-minded Anglican. I have recently been reading the pamphlet *Catholicism To-day*, which gives a survey of the leader in the *Times* of October, 1949, about the Roman Catholic Church and of the long correspondence which followed it. I was continually struck by the extreme language, the sweeping claims and the almost pathological intensity of the letters from Roman Catholics, contrasted with the moderation of the language of the others, who were mostly Anglicans. When the propaganda of the Roman Catholic Church is conducted by laymen it is presented with all the confident conviction of men who will not look the full facts in the face.

Linked with this claim to be the sole true Church are two other claims : that the Roman Church alone has a logical and clear doctrine of spiritual authority, and that she alone upholds and enforces a satisfactorily high standard of Christian morality. The first claim has recently so much impressed Mr. Rich, the author of that stimulating but muddled book, *Spiritual Authority in the Church of England*, that he has joined the Roman Communion. And he was preceded not long before on much the same grounds, by Mr. Hugh Ross Williamson, whose fertile capacity evinced in his books for embellishing historical facts with imaginative invention will find plenty of scope in contemplating the more recent Roman Catholic dogmas. The claim to sustain a superior morality is made regularly every year in the Lenten Pastorals of the bishops of the Irish Roman Church. To regard the thousands of Irish Roman Catholics who emigrate every year to this country as convincing proofs of the truth of this claim would perhaps require that faith based on infallible certainty which only the Roman Church can supply. But this claim to be the sole true Church, with all its corollaries, is undeniably the great strength of the Roman Church to-day, and the great danger which it presents to the Church of England.

II

The main weakness of the Roman Catholic Church is that it does not know the sources of its doctrine, and nobody can be sure what they are. This seems to be a paradoxical statement to make about a Church which claims infallibility, but this is in fact the true state of the case. The Roman Church is the most extreme Modernist of all, more Modernist than the Modern Churchman's Union, more Modernist than the Modern Churchman's Conference. Modernism outside the Roman communion never purposed to do more than subtract from the articles of the traditional Christian faith, but contemporary Roman Modernism is adding to it, at the not inconsiderable rate of three new dogmas each century. There can be no security that this number will not be added to in the course of the next four centuries, and nobody can confidently prophesy what innovations upon tradition Christianity these will embody, nor from what particular source they will be derived. The Roman Church has in sober truth embarked upon an uncharted sea of doctrinal innovation; it has cut loose from its moorings in historical Christianity. Doctrinally it appears to be guided by no fixed standards at all, but by the devotional whims of popular Catholicism and the strange undercurrents of sentiment that affect an organization in which free discussion is suppressed.

The Church of England professes to base her doctrine upon that interpretation of the Bible which can be observed to have taken shape in the first few centuries of the Church's existence and which is summarized in such documents as the Nicene Creed and the Chalcedonian Formula. A great deal of debate can, of course, take place upon these terms, and a great many different interpretations of them can be put forward. But at least the Church of England does confine herself to these limits, broad as they are. The Roman Church cannot give anything like so straightforward an account of the sources of her doctrine. She professes to use Scripture, but she claims the right to supplement Scripure by what she calls tradition. If this meant no more than that she endorses the interpretation of Scripture adopted by the early Church, as the Church of England does, all would be simple enough. But it is by now perfectly clear that she does not mean this. She claims that tradition is a fund of information or of doctrine independent of Scripture, though interpretative of it and suplementary to it. The dogmas of 1854 and and of 1870 and of 1950 are not supposed to be logical developments and inescapable corollaries of doctrine to be found in the Bible. They are alleged to be not inconsistent with Biblical doctrine, but to derive from

a source independent of it—tradition, a body of presumably oral teaching or thought which has been preserved intact but unwritten in the Church for nearly two thousand years. This is the unhappy shift to which the Roman Church has been reduced in her endeavours to defend rationally what her people like to believe If we ask, what determines the deliverances of tradition, we are told that the living current of contemporary thought and faith to be found in the contemporary Church does, and if we ask how *this* is to be determined we are told that the infallible utterances of the Pope crystallize into dogmas and register this tradition. And if we ask, on what occasions has the Pope uttered infallible statements, we can get no clear answer. The fact is that Roman theologians are faced with the dilemma that if they define an infallible utterance in a broad, inclusive sense, they cannot escape laying down conditions into which will fit several utterances of Popes which have been manifestly and palpably mistaken; and if they define infalliblility strictly and narrowly they must admit that the Pope has made infallible statements only about four times in the last nineteen hundred years, and that on all other occasions he has not been assisted by infallibility. The whole claim for infallibility is in fact a game for the academic minded or a desperate rationalization of a doctrinal situation which has got out of hand. It has nothing whatever to do with the realities of faith and revelation and Christian life, as, I would guess, most Roman Catholic theologians admit in their heart of hearts.

The Roman Catholic concept of tradition is a sheer legend, a sheer invention. Up to 1950 it was just conceivable that the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and of Papal Infallibility might be defended along the line of Newman's theory of development. The defence that these doctrines were natural, inscapable developments of early Christian doctrine would have been just feasible, though not, in my opinion, very convincing. But in 1950 that defence was, I take it, officially abandoned. Nobody could argue that the Corporeal Assumption into heaven of the Blessed Virgin Mary was simply a doctrine logically developed from other doctrines, like that of the union of godhead and manhood in the person of Christ. This Assumption was supposed to involve an historical event, including the emptying of a tomb. For this historical event there was no evidence whatever until four hundred years after the time when it was supposed to have taken place. On historical grounds alone there is far more evidence for the assumption of Julius Caesar into heaven than for the assumption of Mary. So we must assume that the Roman Church has abandoned its attempt to endorse Newman's theory, an attempt which was

never more than half-hearted, and now takes refuge in sheer legend, sheer fantasy, sheer arbitrary popular whim, as its doctrinal standard. 'Tradition' is a convenient word to disguise the fact that it has given itself licence to believe whatever it likes, unhampered by history.

This of course accounts for the extraordinary claim that we must not make a distinction between essential and non-essential doctrines, a distinction which is in fact to be found on almost every page of the works of the Christian Fathers of the first four centuries. If we are allowed to question the recent doctrinal innovations of the Roman Church, which she knows to be so very weakly attested, the whole doctrinal patchwork collapses, and worse, the whole Roman Catholic theory of doctrinal authority is exploded. Even if Christian truth were no more than a series of propositions, the cardinal assumption and cardinal mistake made by Newman in his *Development of Christian Doctrine*, we would be under no obligation to admit these Roman dogmas. But Christian truth is not to be likened to a series of propositions. It is more fittingly compared to light, light streaming from the person of Him who is Light; and of course it is possible to be nearer the light or further from it. Some doctrines are nearer the heart of the Christian faith, others further away, and others again in a twilight or debatable region where doctrine melts into speculation. It is not the integrity of the Roman doctrinal system which makes its exponents claim that we must not ask them to distinguish between essential and non-essential doctrine, but its vulnerability. If a firm is bankrupt, it dare not let the auditors examine even a small part of its business; and in the matter of her doctrine of tradition the Roman Catholic Church seems to me to be intellectually bankrupt.

The authoritarian spirit and rigorously hierarchic structure of the Roman Church is perhaps a carapace adopted both to withstand the wear and tear of history, and to hold together a doctrinal system which would otherwise collapse from its internal incompatibility. But even within such a structure there seems to exist a jungle of spiritual and doctrinal authorities rather than a single smooth-running system, as the experiences of Fr. Tyrrell, Dr. Simcox and Mr. Victor Bennett and many others who have been mangled by the ecclesiastical machine instead of processed by it seem to suggest. Support is given to this conjecture by the small but steady stream observable every year of converts from the Roman to the Anglican obedience. An interesting illustration of this confusion about authority is provided by the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church to Biblical criticism. In the first decade

of this century Pope Pius X did his very best to commit the Roman Church irretrievably against any acceptance of Biblical criticism at all; the details of this process are admirably traced in Canon Vidler's book on *The Modernist Movement in the Roman Catholic Church*. Since then, however, it looks as if the Roman Church has been trying to retreat in an unostentatious manner from almost all the positions occupied by the impetuous but indiscreet Pius X, and Pius XII has done his best to ease this retreat. The traditional doctrine of the Inspiration of Scripture still apparently holds good, though few scholars would be so bold as to attempt to describe how, for instance, the Book of Judges or of Leviticus or of Esther can be regarded as inspired in the traditional sense. The many eminent Biblical scholars within the Roman communion still have to use guarded language when they deal with matters of Biblical criticism, and if a layman were to seek guidance on such points as the historical value of the story of Joseph, the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the Davidic authorship of the Psalms, the priority of Mark, the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel, or the Pauline authorship of the Pastorals, he would receive a confused and uncertain reply. The Church of Rome seems to have decided that it must somehow accept Biblical criticism; but it finds the task of reconciling this acceptance with the pre-critical ideas about the Bible to which it is committed an embarrassing one. On this point—surely an important one—neither its spiritual nor its doctrinal authority seems capable of producing any clear guidance. Such a state of affairs is significant of the fundamental weakness of the Roman Church's position. However strongly entrenched it may be in other respects, its position in regard to the sources of its doctrine cannot endure free enquiry. That is why it is so anxious to suppress free enquiry among its own people and to shield them from contact with people of other religious traditions.

III

I would not properly complete the task allotted to me in this paper if I did not end by indicating some of the ways in which in my opinion the threat of Roman propaganda can be met and its weaknesses exploited. One way is still quite popular in the Church of England, and that is to imitate as far as possible the doctrines, the behaviour, the customs and the vocabulary of the Roman Church, throwing over them no more than a graceful veil of nominal Anglicanism, in the hope of beating Rome at her own

game. There are still many Anglican clergy who believe in referring to the sacrament of Holy Communion as the Mass, in speaking of the 'sacrament of penance' when they mean private confession of sins, in organizing pilgrimages to Walsingham, and so on. The Oxford Movement has contributed permanent insights to the Church of England and to many religious traditions beyond that Church; it would be wrong to attempt to undo such of its achievements as its emphasis upon the Church as a society apart from the state and its insistence upon the centrality of the sacrament of the Eucharist. But I am convinced that modern Anglo-Catholicism of an extreme type is the way where, for the Church of England, madness lies. It is impossible honestly to reconcile such mock-Romanism with anything that can be called distinctively Anglican, and nobody has ever produced a satisfactory reason why such mock-Romanism should not become true Romanism. I very much hope that this particular way of dealing with the threat of the Roman Catholic Church will find fewer and fewer exponents in the future. It does not seem to me of much use even to emphasize against Roman Catholic claims, as many to-day do, that the external structure of the Church of England is in unbroken continuity with the pre-Reformation Church, that we possess the ancient churches and ancient titles which the Mediaeval English Church possessed. It is perfectly obvious that the mere possession of old buildings and old names is no proof at all that the possessors of them possess true religion. Besides, other branches of the Anglican communion, for whom we claim an equal Catholicity with ourselves, do not possess these advantages and cannot claim to be the ancient, established churches of the lands where they live.

The way in which most clergy of the Church of England seem to me to deal with the competition of the Church of Rome strikes me as an unfortunate mixture of pain, embarrassment, bewilderment and benevolence. They behave rather like some cultured member of the Aztec civilization faced with a fanatical seventeenth century Spanish soldier. It has chanced to me on more than one occasion to be requested to talk to some person who is tempted to leave the Anglican communion and join that of Rome, and I have been surprised to discover the bewilderment, the embarrassment, the sheer incompetence displayed by these persons' vicars or chaplains when faced with such a situation. They have obviously never been instructed how to deal with Roman Catholic propaganda, either at their theological colleges or later. The kindly timidity inspired in the average English churchman by the appearance of Roman Catholic propaganda has recently been well

illustrated by the correspondence in *The Times* which followed the references in the House of Lords to the action of the Spanish government in confiscating some thousands of Bibles belonging to the British and Foreign Bible Society in Madrid. Some prominent Roman Catholic laity had the impudence to affect indignation that the non-Roman members of the House of Lords should voice their resentment at the Spanish government's odious and indefensible action. One enterprising gentleman wrote to suggest that the trouble was that the Bibles in question lacked the Apocrypha, implying apparently that this fully justified the Spanish government's actions. Another suggested, whether with greater insolence or ignorance I cannot determine, that the Bibles were translated in a partisan and Protestant sense, and that this justified their being seized. But no letter appeared from any non-Roman-Catholic exposing the folly and childishness of these arguments. Some bishop, some dean, some professor, had only to write asking what exactly the English Roman Catholics would say if the English government seized all the copies of Monsignor Ronald Knox's recent translation of the Bible on the grounds that it was a translation from the Latin and not from the Hebrew and Greek, and therefore a partisan interpretation calling for suppression. But no such letter appeared.

I believe that we must begin by realizing that the Roman Catholic Church in this country is behaving like a dissenting sect, and instructing our clergy and theological students how to counter its propaganda as we would counter the propaganda of any other hostile sect. I know that it is inaccurate to regard the Roman Church as a whole as if it were a sect like the Plymouth Brethren. It has a long and noble history and it has immense resources of scholarship and sanctity. But the fact remains that in this country it behaves in an intensely sectarian manner, very much as the Free Churches were behaving a century ago. The Free Churches to-day do not behave in a sectarian way; schooled by adversity, and encouraged by increasing friendliness within the Church of England itself, they are ready to go far in co-operating with the Established Church and in recognizing that together we face common enemies and common difficulties whose common threat is much more important than the differences between us. They no longer refuse to recognize our Church as a genuine Church, nor take every opportunity of getting an advantage over us, nor pursue a policy of irreconcilable enmity. But that policy is precisely the one which the Roman Catholic Church does pursue, with an unscrupulousness never displayed by the Free Churches. It seems to me wrong to blind ourselves to this fact, wrong to behave as if

the Roman Church was really a friendly body in all essentials at one with ourselves. In particular we are morally bound to resist its policy of causing every non-Roman partner in a mixed marriage to promise that the children of the marriage shall be brought up Roman Catholics. For the vicar of a parish to acquiesce in this arrangement, and not to resist it to the utmost of his power when it comes under his notice, is not gentlemanly toleration but sheer flaccidity. The Anglican position as regards Christian marriage is a stronger one than most people realize. The Church of Rome, for instance, re-marries each year nearly four times as many divorced people as the Church of England does, even though the Church of England performs three times as many marriages annually as does the Church of Rome in this country. A Christian body which behaves in a sectarian manner should be made aware that it cannot do so without incurring the penalties as well as the triumphs of sectarianism.

But much more important than anything else in our facing the threat and exploiting the weakness of Roman Catholic propaganda to-day is that we should ourselves secure greater doctrinal coherence within our own tradition. I realize that doctrinal comprehensiveness is a good thing; I do not hanker after a rigid uniformity of thought. There are, and presumably there always will be, two wings or schools of thought within the Church of England. It is not comprehensiveness that is the weakness of our Church, it is haziness. Too many of our clergy are not so much broadminded as intellectually lazy. The trouble is not that in Emmanuel Church you will hear Calvinism and in All Souls you will hear Thomism. It is that in any church you are likely to hear sermons that are of too low a standard to be classed as anything at all, except vague moralism or worthless sentimentality. Peculiarly searching intellectual demands are to-day being made upon the clergy of the Church of England. There are far more people in the population with secondary school and university education than there were even twenty years ago. Logical Positivism seems to be capturing all the young philosophers. The illusion that scientific knowledge is the only form of knowledge is widespread among all types of educated people. Nihilism or relativism in morals seeems to be gaining ground every year among the semi-educated. The Church of Rome has to meet this threat doctrines which at least appear well-grounded and are certainly clear-cut, and a priesthood who have been very carefully, even though very narrowly, educated. In contrast, the Church of England suffers from a haziness which is, I suspect, in many instances a gentlemanly form of laziness.

There is no reason why we should tolerate this haziness. We have an Anglican heritage quite as rational and presentable as the Roman, and in my opinion much more Scriptural. There are several hopeful signs in the theological world that this heritage is being revived and appreciated anew, but I see little evidence that this appreciation has yet begun to affect more than a very small number of the parish clergy, the people who do the teaching and preaching in our Church, who are, so to speak, our front-line troops in meeting the attack of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and of sectarianism in so far as it is allied with these three enemies. I speak as one who has had experience of four quite different institutions for educating students in theology, in Ireland, in America, and in this country, during the last eighteen years, and in my opinion we do not lay nearly enough emphasis upon the intellectual side in preparing our theological students. I fear that for about the last thirty years our Theological Colleges have assumed too readily that what a man needs as a preparation for the Ministry is to be taught how to say his prayers and how to conduct services, and that nothing else matters much. Not only is it difficult to imagine how prayers can be satisfactory prayers if behind them there is no gospel, no carefully thought-out pattern of reasonable convictions; but religious experience, no matter how intense, piety, no matter how enthusiastic, should never be a substitute for thought in religion. Our doctrine cannot be simply spun out of our religious experience, unless we want to find ourselves in the company of Bernadette Soubirous or Joseph Smith.

In particular there are two points to which, I believe, more attention should be paid in preparing what might be called the intellectual armoury of our Church. First, I am not convinced that the older men who are now in a most heartening way coming forward for ordination are being trained with enough care and attention. The preparing of men who have, in most cases, not had a university education and have followed some other calling for most of their lives demands, not less attention than the preparing of the others, but more. One year in a Theological College devoted to imbibing a few clichés and a few prejudices is not nearly enough. It is not necessarily the best policy to train these men along with the younger and better educated ordinands; ideally there should be one or two large Colleges devoted to the training of these men solely. In fact, I would suggest that sooner or later the Church of England will have to reduce the number of her Theological Colleges, for there are at the moment too many Colleges chasing too few students, direct all her younger ordi-

nands into Colleges linked directly with Universities and therefore capable of profiting from the abundant funds which the state is perfectly willing to spend on theological education, and retain only one or two Colleges outside the Universities for the training of non-graduate or older men.

Secondly, not nearly enough attention is yet paid in our Theological Colleges and in the Church at large to preaching. Preaching in the Church of England is at the moment at its lowest ebb of achievement and of esteem since the days of Cromwell. Remember, please, that most parochial clergy hardly ever hear any sermons except their own, and are therefore in no position to judge of the truth of this opinion. We ordain hundreds of men every year with a form of service which puts peculiar emphasis upon the obligation of preaching nothing but the very pure Word of God. We then send them into parishes where nobody cares what they preach, where trivial chat or dreary moralizing or just sheer worthless nonsense is tolerated happily alongside of a few genuine serious attempts to find out what the Word of God is and to preach it. It is not primarily a matter of learning the technique of preaching, nor even of studying the problem of communication. What a great many clergy need is a few lessons in, not How to Preach, but What to Preach. So disastrously low has preaching fallen in public esteem in the Church that it has been seriously suggested that we should abandon preaching on the grounds that modern man will not listen to it—preaching, a custom which is, if anything is, 'borne in the bosom of revealed religion', a practice which is Catholic more than anything else is Catholic, far more Catholic than most of the customs, objects and curious prejudices that are usually given that name! Until each diocese runs Schools of Preaching as well as Schools of Prayer and Schools of Evangelism and Schools of Marriage, and induces most of the clergy to attend them, the perfectly sound case for the Church of England will go by default through the incompetence of the clergy. The way to meet the intellectual challenge of the Church of Rome in parishes is not to organize pilgrimages and introduce more and more elaboration into our services, but to revive the admirable Anglican tradition of clear and convincing preaching.

Finally there is one suggestion which I put forward only tentatively and with some expectation of earning a rebuke for making it at all. I am a son of the Church of Ireland, and I do no therefore know how exactly the higher dignitaries of the Church of England are appointed. One might reasonably conclude that in order to become one it is essential to be a member of the University of Oxford and very useful to have studied at Cuddesdon

College or Westcott House. But a more or less detached observer cannot help noticing that in recent years the intellectual leadership and the official leadership of the Church of England have been far from coinciding, and in particular that an increasing number of sees to-day seem to be filled by men who have first occupied the position of Suffragan Bishop, a position which in most circumstances men of first-rate ability and intellect will not accept. One recollects the remarkable article recently written by the eminent French Jesuit Fr. Bouyer, part of which was published in the magazine *Theology*, in which he warmly approves the pattern of episcopacy exhibited by the South Indian bishops, and in a temperate manner criticizes the Church of England bishop as being too often primarily an administrator and not enough in accordance with the early Church's conception of the bishop, the fountain of doctrine and of intellectual and spiritual inspiration in his diocese. Further, one cannot help noticing that the occupants of all but a few deaneries and of many residential canonries seem to be distinguished for any qualities but those of scholarship. *Verbum sapienti.* Perhaps it is enough to say that in order to meet the intellectual dangers that threaten the Church of England it might be advisable to have rather more intellectuals in high places in the Church, even though such a course might run the risk of people in high places saying unpleasant or awkward things.

In conclusion I should say that whatever hard things I may say about the Roman Catholic Church I think that we should all admire and respect her; we should indeed have to be very narrow-minded or very ignorant not to do so. Because we are not members of the Roman Church we can sincerely say these things about another denomination. But because we are not members of the Roman Church we ought to know clearly why we are not, and how to convince others that our disagreement with her is justified.

RELIGION IN THE UNIVERSITY

By The Rev. Mervyn Stockwood, M.A., Vicar of Great St. Mary's, the University Church, Cambridge

THE Cambridge of the nineteen-fifties is a different place from the Cambridge of the nineteen-thirties. And nowhere is the change more apparent than in the practice of religion. When I was an undergraduate, college chapels were sparsely attended. A famous preacher, like Dean Inge, Dr. Barnes of Birmingham or Archbishop Temple, attracted an audience, but convinced Christians were in a minority. Memories are short and statistics can be misleading, but I believe that, apart from ordination candidates, the congregations in most college chapels would number a dozen to twenty at evensong, and appreciably less at Holy Communion. To-day the chapels are often filled on Sunday evenings, and in some colleges extra chairs are required. I have assisted at Communion on Sunday mornings, and it is quite common to find fifty to seventy undergraduates kneeling at a college altar. Even more remarkable is the attendance at weekday services. I know the University is larger than it was, but that does not fully explain the increase. A recent public opinion poll among students asserted that fifty-three per cent. are associated with a place of worship, usually the college chapel. I do not know the corresponding figure in my day as an undergraduate, but I imagine it must have been well below twenty per cent.

I have pondered the reasons for this change, which should engage the consideration of the enquirer. Generalisations are easy to make, but they usually result in misleading simplifications. What I write can be no more than a partial explanation, and it may be that in some particulars I am wrong. Nevertheless as I understand the situation, five factors must be taken into account.

(a) Twenty years ago the idealist was confronted with practical issues that demanded practical solutions. I remember the hunger-marchers in Trinity Street and the demonstrations of the unemployed. The undergraduate, whose conscience was pricked, felt that a solution was to be found at the political level. It never occurred to him that the Church of Archbishop Cosmo Lang was relevant. In those days I was a Tory and I recall the sense of appalling frustration which many of us experienced when we challenged visiting Conservative speakers to outline a programme that would remedy such obvious wrongs. Our political opponents were in no doubt about the answer. Socialism or Communism—and John Cornford was a contemporary—would supply the goal,

the method and the drive. In the circumstances it was not surprising that left-wing politics became a religion that resolved the guilt complex, gave purpose to life, and satisfied the idealist. It was the same in foreign affairs. Sir Samuel Hoare and Lord Halifax were pillars of the Church. Hoare made a pact with Laval and Halifax went to Rome to raise his glass to Victor Emmanuel as Emperor of Ethiopia. I was at my theological college in Cambridge at the time, and I shall never forget the cries of derision that amounted to fury, at the debates in the Union. Religion, especially the religion of the Established Church, the Church of Lang, Hoare and Halifax, was not only useless but a hypocritical farce.

Although I had left the university when the Spanish civil war started, I returned from time to time and sensed the quickened interest in politics. Political enthusiasm reached its zenith. Not many followed John Cornford into battle, but the stocking of food ships became the symbol of those who believed that the hopes for humanity and the Iberian fulcrum were closely related. It is easy to be wise after an event and to smile at the illusions of adolescence, but it would be unrealistic to dismiss the deep sincerity and genuine altruism which characterised a generation that believed it was striking a blow for freedom. When I spoke, as a guest in the Union, on the Munich agreement, the atmosphere was not unlike a revivalist meeting. The undergraduates made their points with burning conviction and the disciples on the Left evangelised for political conversions. Political viewpoints really mattered.

How different is the Cambridge of to-day. The passions, and perhaps the compassion, are absent. But it is not surprising. The evidences of poverty and injustice are less apparent. Trinity Street no longer echoes with the tramp of hunger marchers and the undergraduates are not asked to provide hospitality for the unemployed. The words 'Means Test' excite nobody, because few, if any, understand their historical implication. Occasional Labour speakers tell of the Bad Old Days, but the audience is as little moved as it would be by an account of military hygienics in the Crimean war.

And the clouds of disappointment hang over the welfare state. This is, perhaps, an inarticulate intuition rather than a careful assessment, but it exists. Whereas we complained that politics had not done enough, our successors think politics have done too much. And although undergraduates do not seem to treat their party allegiances seriously, it is significant that the Conservative Association has three times as many members as the Labour Club.

To what extent this is due to newspaper propaganda and to Public School assumptions I cannot determine. But it is as true of the products of the grammar schools, though for a different reason. They have had to work hard to get a place at the university, and they are critical of people who are alleged to reap rewards without exerting themselves. In any case, the welfare state is inclined to be dismissed as a half-way-house to a slackers' paradise. In the vacations many of them supplement their grants by working in factories and when they return to Cambridge their stories of industrial idleness constitute a favourite talking-point.

It would be unfair to suggest the disappointment has caused a political vacuum; and there is little evidence of the negative attitude that prepares the soil for fascism. Rather politics have taken a lower place on the list of priorities, and there is less faith in their efficacy to achieve Utopia.

As a Christian I have, for a long time, regarded politics as the science of deferred repentance. Although I am a convinced socialist and am keenly interested in the success of the Labour movement ,experience has taught me that men frequently try to evade responsibilities on the ground that personal maladjustments and frustrations are due to economics and sociological factors that can be righted by acts of parliament. We have had the acts of parliament, but many of the maladjustments remain. Hence it is not so easy to defer repentance. And that, I think, is one reason for the younger generation seeking a solution on a spiritual level, with the emphasis on personalism rather than politics.

(b) The political undergraduate of my generation tended to be a philistine; and, in his defence, he would have argued that his concern with practical affairs limited his time for cultural pursuits. Feelings of political guilt have diminished, and men can pursue their pleasures with a clearer consicence. But that is not all. Because the centre of interest has shifted there is a keener approach to the humanities. And this is strengthened by the frequent warnings of the dangers from over-specialisation. Although it is often said that the modern student knows more and more about less and less, I question its fairness. The scientists, who are usually regarded as the worst offenders, are encouraged by their teachers to have wide interests, and it is not uncommon for the Faculties to arrange courses of lectures on subjects quite different from their own. For instance, I was recently asked to address the physicists in the Cavendish Laboratory on religion, and my lecture was one in a series that dealt with non-scientific topics. Although these interests are dilettantish rather than profound, doors are being opened and sensitively stimulated. Of

course, Cambridge, like any other university, has always had its addicts to culture whose mutual conversation *is an embarras de richesse*. But this is different. Bronowski has said that 'the layman's key to science is its unity with the arts'. The approach of the undergraduate expresses itself less coherently, but it is not unrelated. He feels he should not be imprisoned by the limitations of his subject, but be free to explore other territories, and to learn new vocabularies. Religion often finds a place on the list.

(*c*) My generation, without bothering to analyse the term 'Christian civilisation', took it for granted. At school we saw maps of the world decorated with pink to denote the extent of the British Empire; and our way of life seemed safe enough. To-day the map is different, and the feeling of security has gone. And our way of life, which we vaguely associated with Christianity, has lost its grip. In one country after another a rival philosophy has appeared. This fact accounts, I think, for the revival of interest in Christianity as an historical religion, and explains the attraction of Rome. Christendom suggests an integrated society, and Christendom, insofar as it existed, was based on doctrinal presuppositions which demanded practical implications.

For some, a nostalgic belief in a golden age coupled with an admiration for a strong uncompromising system of doctrine and practice, submission to the papacy seems to be the answer. But the appeal of Rome should not be exaggerated. It is more successful than it was, but converts in the university constitute a trickle, not a stream. Cambridge may not have a Martyrs' Memorial, but it has always been more ruggedly Protestant than Oxford. Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer occupied the pulpit of the University Church, and their influence still survives. There is a concern for the Church as an institution and an examination of the ideas that underlie it with an appraisement of its place in history, but the approach is basically post-Reformation.

(*d*) Freud explained God as a projection of the father-image. And his view must be taken into account when assessing the reasons for the renewed interest in religion. Billy Graham started his mission to Cambridge with horrific descriptions of hydrogen warfare, and, like the evangelical preachers of the last century, played on natural fears to induce men to turn to God for protection. He was not successful. There have been so many threats, so much crisis talk, and 'wolf' has been cried so often, the undergraduates were not to be frightened into conversion by the prospect of atomic calamity. But that does not imply a refusal to recognise man's comparative impotence in world affairs. Far

from it. A sense of insecurity, due to many causes, is a characteristic of the modern student. And in some cases it is increased by the shadow of national service, which makes it difficult to plan for the future, and leads to uncertainty and frustration. Modern cosmology has shattered our geocentric universe, and the complexities of life have reduced us to flotsam and jetsam on a limitless ocean. A deep psychological apprehensiveness is the result. In the circumstances it is not surprising that undergraduates are looking for an anchor. In childhood the antidote of helplessness is a sure trust in a wise father; in adolescence the clay feet and limitations of parents cannot be disguised, and we have too look elsewhere for a proximate and ultimate security. Whether or not we accept the validity of its claims, this is precisely what Christianity, with its belief in a beneficent providence, offers. A heavenly Father, who knows the number of our hairs and is concerned with the fate of a sparrow, is able to give each man his proper place in the jig-saw puzzle of life.

(*e*) Cambridge has become a large place, probably too large. Within a few days of my return I was invited to attend an informal meeting, concerned with a case of suicide, the primary cause of which was loneliness. I asked whether loneliness was exceptional, and was told that it was probably experienced by twenty per cent. of undergraduates: in fact several said this figure was an underestimate. I have no means of assessing the reliability of this guess, but, at least, it indicates the problem. When I was an undergraduate the university was smaller and the colleges constituted manageable units. And as the great majority came from Public Schools they arrived at the university with a number of friends. The position is different to-day. The colleges are too large; lodgings can be remote; the boy from a grammar school, who has always lived at home, may be isolated. The authorities are aware of the situation, but it is not always easy to know what should be done. But the chapel is a meeting place; its congregation is a community; and the chaplains are zealous pastors. In short, religion is coping with the problem of loneliness more successfully than anybody else.

But, when we pass to analyse the Christian situation, the position is confused. Unlike the provincial universities which are usually undenominational and without chaplains, Oxford and Cambridge have an Anglican chapel and priest in each college, and both have university churches. Nowhere in Britain is the Church of England in a more favoured position. An housing estate with a population of ten thousand must be content with one minister and a prefabricated building; a Cambridge college with

four hundred undergraduates has a beautiful chapel, a chaplain, and sometimes a clerical dean. And there are no financial worries.

But the chaplains are not content to rest on their privileges, nor are they narrowly denominationl. Most of them have heavy programmes and they welcome people of all persuasions to the chapels. In fact the easing of sectarian tension is one of the most noticeable post-war changes. The forms of worship are usually from the Prayer Pook, but Nonconformists are invited to preach.

While it is difficult to generalise about this' official Christianity', it is probably true to say it is essentially latitudinarian. Although it does not sit lightly to doctrine and is loyal to the main tenets of the Anglican Church, it is broadminded, tolerant and reasonable. It believes in encouraging men to pursue Truth, rather than forcing authoritarian dogmas upon them. And it is increasingly aware of its relationship to other branches of knowledge. The iron curtain between religion and science may not have disapeared, but there is a better understanding, coupled with an attempt to appreciate one another's vocabularies and thought-forms. For instance it is not uncommon for chaplains to arrange meetings at which an address will be given by a member of another faculty, who may call himself an agnostic, with a view to discovering common ground for the scientific and theological outlooks. And in the University Church a series of lectures is to be given on Approaches to Reality by leading members of the science faculties. It would be untrue to describe the new situation as a rapprochement, but it marks a change in the climate of opinion which, one day, may lead to an éclaircissement.

Another difference between the official Christianity of a generation ago and now is the importance attached to the social implication of belief. Cambridge may seem a cloud-cuckoo land, but it knows that the Granta, the Volga and the Jordan exist in the same world. The result is not political consciousness in the narrow sense, but a growing realisation on the part of the Church that it must encourage its members to concern themselves with practical affairs. Public School religion, in the earlier part of the century, was mindful of Lady Bountiful. But this is different. Chaplains no longer tell undergraduates that their social obligations are fulfilled by playing billiards at the college mission in Bethnal Green. They are concerned with their contribution to the community when they leave Cambridge. This awareness may be woolly and uninformed, but it owes something to the spirit of William Temple. It lacks a coherent philisophy, but is inspired by a sense of duty stimulated by outside speakers, and visits, in the vacations, to housing estates and industrial centres. Although

the emphasis is still on personal morality, the social nexus is not entirely ignored.

No doubt the challenge of Marxism is partly responsible for these new insights. Few undergraduates understand Communist theory, but they know that it has an all-embracing view of life. And Christianity, if it is to withstand it, must be as catholic in its interests and applications

What I have said of official Christianity in the university is true of Nonconformity. The dissenting undergraduate, although he usually attends his college chapel, is a loyal member of his sect; he worships with Free Churchmen on Sunday mornings and takes part in the activities of his Nonconformist society. And in some respects Free Churchmen are more forward-looking and radical than Anglicans. They have the prickles of a minority, but are free from the inhibitions and restraints of the Establishment.

To pass to unofficial Christianity, to the organisations that are sponsored by the undergraduates with, or without, the assistance of the chaplains:

The Student Christian Movement has an appreciable membership, and attracts people of all denominations. Although it is self-governing, its attitude to the authorities is correct and co-operative. It seeks to supplement the work of the college chapels, not to provide an alternative. Its approach is essentially reasonable, liberal and practical; it provides a vauable forum for discussion, and it supplies an outlet for enthusiasms which might be less able to express themselves in more traditional settings.

The Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union is altogether different. It is fundamentaist, authoritarian, irrational, and profoundly suspicious of all forms of Christianity, save its own. And it has a considerable following.

The C.I.C.C.U. was a consequence of the revivalist movement in the nineteenth century. Its fortunes have varied, but to-day it is probably stronger than it has ever been. It begins its search for recruits with evangelistic camps for Public Schoolboys. These boys, who are nurtured in Christian unions when they return to school, are eagerly shepherded by senior undergraduates when they arrive at Cambridge, and often join the C.I.C.C.U. without fully realising its implications.

The enthusiasm and sincerity of the members are what one would expect in a proselytising movement. And this is said without any sense of patronage. But it does not make a liberal the less critical of its ethos.

Human beings prate of freedom, but it is doubtful whether

many believe in it, or want it. And perhaps most of us are fearful of its possible consequences. Athens and Sparta are historical symbols of two approaches to life. The one believes in the liberation of the human spirit, the other in the direction, if not the suppression, of the human spirit. In the sixteenth century the conflict had a religious expression; to-day the expression is usually in the realm of politics and sociology. The C.I.C.C.U., like the Church of Rome, is impenitently authoritarian. It pays lip-service to freedom of conscience, but always in the background is the dictatorial sanction of an infallible corpus of doctrine—in this case, the Scriptures.

It is not easy to define fundamentalism, because fundamentalists themselves are not agreed on a definition. But the practical outcome is a superstitious, uncritical attitude to the Bible, a belief in the transubstantiation of the written word. Of course, there must be a measure of interpretation, and this is the prerogative of accepted 'popes' who are accorded an infallibility of which Rome might well be envious. The intellectual consequences are disastrous. In some sense all religion is necessarily irrational, but there are degrees of irrationality. And the C.I.C.C.U. is highly irrational. Because it distrusts the intellect it belittles it. Instead of encouraging the critical faculty, it disparages it. The Bible, every detail of which is unerringly inspired by God, gives the first and last word. And there is no more to be said. The sacrifice of liberty on the altar of authoritarianism is usually a symptom of a deep seated insecurity. And insecurity is a characteristic of adolescence and of the present age.

Another feature of the C.I.C.C.U. is its philistinism. The members are so occupied with prayer-meetings, bible groups and evangelistic services, they have little time for the humanities. Painting, music, poetry, the theatre, an appreciation of nature are not within their terms of reference. And it is not uncommon for them to leave Cambridge culturally starved, spiritually unbalanced, and aesthetically uneducated. What of their positive message? Perhaps the answer can best be found in the mission of Billy Graham which they recently sponsored, and which epitomised their doctrinal position.

First, Billy Graham preached a 'simple gospel' which appeals to a tabloid generation. He has little time for ecclesiastical systems, and by-passes intellectual conundrums. And it is significant that the majority of his converts were freshmen, who, no doubt, found his 'no-nonsense' approach a stimulating refreshment as compared with the more stringent diet in their school chapels. But one wonders how they will react when their minds

are sufficiently trained to examine critically the Graham presuppositions. It may be true that some undergraduates evade moral issues by intellectual deceptions, and there is a world of difference between honest and dishonest doubt, but it is unwise, especially in the university pulpit, to belittle Reason. For most of us, religious faith implies a long pilgrimage—here a little, there a little—and whatever progress we make is due to our response to the interaction of experience, reason and faith.

The weak chink in the armour of the purveyors of the 'simple gospel' is the refusal to examine and define hypotheses. The Bible may say the individual should surrender his soul to God, but the seeker on the religious periphery wants to know what is meant by the words 'soul' and 'God'. And, because he is an unbeliever, he needs solid argument before he can be convinced of the authority of the Scriptures. The C.I.C.C.U., and all Christians, have something to learn from the linguistic philosophers: words, if they are to be used for the purposes of communication, and not merely for a one-sided conversation, must be capable of interpretation in terms of definable experience.

Second, Billy Graham provided a facile solution for international and social problems. If man is put right with God, the world will be put right. And to illustrate his point he commented on the splendid qualities of President Eisenhower. The immature undergraduate may be attracted by such a dégagé argument, but when he becomes aware of the complexities of the situation he will recognise its speciosity. I asked a C.I.C.C.U. supporter what would happen to a man making a hydrogen bomb if he became converted, and I was told he would seek other employment, more fitting for a child of God. May be. But what about the man who takes his place in the atomic factory? And what of the underlying political causes? As a Christian I do not minimise the importance of personal conversion, but I am not unaware of the need for social changes and political adjustments. The hymn writer, Newton, composed 'How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear!' while on his ship, trafficking in slaves. The C.I.C.C.U. cannot question the authenticity of his conversion, nor the wickedness of slavery. But it probably overlooks the political and economic reasons for such a woeful moral contradiction. The problems confronting our generation are more intricate, and individual conversion *per se* is not an adequate answer. To pretend that it is may attract the unexperienced freshman, but if he learns to deduce true inferences from reliable premises he will distinguish the mirage from the pool.

The emphasis in Billy Graham's preaching was on justice, not

mercy. God is the plaintiff and man is the defendant. And the plaintiff demands, and the court awards, what the defendant cannot give, a perfect human sacrifice. This desperate situation is resolved by the action of Jesus who offers himself as a substitute. By the shedding of His blood God's honour is avenged, and relationships between Him and the human race are re-established. In simple language, justice has been done, and God and man are quits.

This was the kernel of Billy Graham's message. In the earlier parts of his addresses he focussed attention on man's depraved condition. All men have broken God's laws; all men are sinners. Next, he told his hearers that man, in his better moments, had wanted to be cleansed from his guilt; and he gave us graphic, and revolting, details of primitive blood sacrifices. These sacrifices were the shadows of Calvary's sacrifice when Christ, by taking upon Himself our guilt and filth, paid the penalty of our sins and appeased an outraged God with His blood. Finally, it was up to us to claim the benefits of the transaction which could cleanse and redeem us.

I do not deny the germ of Christian orthodoxy in what he said, in spite of the distortions and misconceptions, but I question whether such a message leads men to forgiveness, as the Bible undersands that word, or, to an experience of divine sonship.

But there is no gainsaying the popularity of such an approach, for reasons that Freud could explain. It is comparatively easy to produce a sense of guilt in young people. I once heard an Anglo-Catholic monk speak at a voluntary Lent service in a Public School chapel on the vileness of secret sins and personal vices. He offered sacramental confession as a means of release. Although such a practice was not in accordance with the traditions of the school, there was a queue for the penitential stool. Billy Graham and the C.I.C.C.U. abhor sacramental confession, but their techniques for stimulating a sense of guilt have much in common with the Anglo-Catholic monk's. The difference between them is one of methodology for the disposal of guilt.

The mission resulted in five hundred decisions. Their worth will be proved by time. Genuine conversion, a deepening of experince, an expression of a psychological need, an admission of guilt, a response to temporary excitement will probably have their place in the total. But whether it is compatible with integrity to demand a decision under such conditions is doubtful. Human personality is sacred, and as conversion impinges upon the deepest things in a man's make-up, the approach should always be

cautious and with reverence. Undergraduates can be won for noble causes; but noble causes demand noble methods.

Finally, a word about the relationship between the theologians and those who owe allegiance to other academic disciplines. Much has been said about religion and science, and generalisations about the impact of the one one the other are dangerous. Nevertheless, I can say that there seems to be a change in the climate between my undergraduate days and to-day. To be a Christian does not so easily lead to a charge of intellectual disreputability. There is more readiness to live and to let live. But that does not imply any bridging of the gulf. The Christian thinks of life in one set of terms, the physicist, the bio-chemist, the physiologist and the psychologist in others. There is little common ground between them. To give but one illustration: the Christian views warped human nature in the terms of sin and grace; other people think of it in terms of hormones, the Oedipus complex, a leuchotomy or the supply of calcium. We have only to pose the problem of the relationship between the physical organism of the brain and the nature of the mind to appreciate the extent of the difference in our aproaches. I should like to feel that the Church is aware of the situation, but I doubt it. Our concern for orthodoxy seems to blind us to the challenge of modern knowledge. And yet the University should be the place where these questions are fearlessly faced. Perhaps they will be. Christianity is more sure of itself than it was; the Church has less reason to apologise for itself; its appeal is more widespread. Time alone will show whether the present revival is a death kick or a birth pang.

PRESENT TRENDS IN THE ANGLO-CATHOLIC MOVEMENT

By Brother George Every, Society of the Sacred Mission, Kelham

WHEN I was first asked to give this paper I hesitated, not to address this conference, for in an important sense I would wish to be reckoned a modern churchman, committed to the task of maintaining lines of communication between the Church of England and the sensitive growing points in the mind of the present age, to converse across the frontier with men of letters and psycho-analysts, at such places as the *Present Question Conference*. My doubt relates to my capacity to interpret the Anglo-Catholic movement. I have lived at Kelham all my adult life, and my sorties into the world have not been often into what are called ecclesiastical circles. But it is true that nearly all our students at Kelham come from Anglo-Catholic parishes, and that practically all begin their ministry in parishes with a daily celebration of the eucharist. And many of them come back to discuss their problems with us. So I do know something of what is happening to Anglo-Catholicism.

Twenty-six years ago, when I first came to Kelham, Anglo-Catholics could be divided fairly easily into two main groups, Liberals who followed the line of development from *Lux Mundi* to *Essays Catholic and Critical*, and Conservatives who, without being necessarily Fundamentalist, distrusted the donnish divinity of Oxford and Cambridge, and without being necessarily Papalist, had as many Roman as Anglican books on their shelves. Kelham never fitted very easily into either category. In Liberal eyes we were a seminary with a difference. We believed in a theological education which included the humanities, rather than in a humane education wedded, perhaps a little uneasily, to some subsequent study of theology. But in the eyes of Conservative Anglo-Catholics our educational procedures were open to doubt. Our students studied intensively modern psychology and modern philosophy. They were compelled to think for themselves, first about the nature of thinking, and then about dogmatic questions. The process was disturbing, and likely to produce unexpected and unconventional approaches to ecclesiastical and theological problems.

In the 1930's, it seems to me, the atmosphere changed suddenly. The change was beginning in my undergraduate days between 1926 and 1929. It came upon us like a flood after 1931.

Liberalism of every kind became open to attack, in philosophy, in politics, in theology, in general culture. The shadow of Wittgenstein lengthened in the philosophical schools. At Kelham perhaps we knew of its presence earlier than in most places, because it was part of our task to be interested in philosophical questions. Idealism, which we had been concerned to criticize, evaporated, and with it the philosophy of religion that underlay both Liberal Catholicism and Liberal Protestantism. At the same time, a new kind of Roman Catholic book appeared. A far more lively and intelligent presentation of Thomism became current. We were aware of the liturgical movement, and of new theological movements in continental Protestantism from Sweden to Switzerland, of Aulen, Niemoller, Barth, and Brunner. T. S. Eliot and, a little later, Charles Williams, gave us a new sense of the presence of prophecy in our own Church and our own tradition. Kierkegaard appeared on our shelves.

At first sight it might appear that these new influences, all of them in some sense hostile to Idealistic philosophy and Liberal theology, gave fresh strength to conservative elements in the Church of England, Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical alike. But this appearance was, I think, deceptive. The campaign against the South India scheme, which was launched in the 1930's, did indeed proceed on what seemed like conservative lines. But it seems to me in retrospect that many who engaged in it were a good deal less certain of arguments for a rigid view of the Apostolic succession than of the vagueness and imprecision of the general line of argument used at the time by supporters of the scheme. No doubt some able Anglo-Catholic theologians wished to withdraw the Church of England altogether from all engagement with the ecumenical movement, but others were sympathetic with the revival of Protestant theology at home and abroad, and with all that Dr. Oldham and his friends were trying to do, not only to assist in the Church struggle on the continent, where Roman Catholics and Protestants were drawn together in resistance to the Nazis, but to promote a theological understanding of the problem of Church, community, and state in this country and in America. T. S. Eliot, for instance, combined an acid criticism of theological imprecision in the South India scheme with a very intimate relationship, not only with Dr. Oldham, but with Paul Tillich and Karl Mannheim.

Anglo-Catholics of all kinds were interested in the liturgical movement in the Roman Catholic Church abroad, but on rather different levels. All welcomed a more sympathetic approach to problems of Christian unity among French and German Roman

Catholics, but many did not realize that in the eyes of such men as Père Congar, Dom Clement Lialine, and the Abbé Couturier, the Church of England is interesting, though by no means satisfying, as a place where an attempt has been made to integrate Catholic and Protestant traditions, and to interpret historical Christianity in a vernacular idiom, not only through an English liturgy, but through a way of dealing with theological questions that is nearer to the idiom and interests of the lay world than the theology of the 'Schools'. I know at least one instance of an Anglo-Catholic theological student who travelled abroad in continental religious houses with something like the traditional purposes of ecclesiological explorers, but came back thoroughly engaged wth the ecumenical movement in the wider sense, having been to such places as the French Protestant community at Taisé, stayed with the Orthodox in Paris, and learned much more of the significance of Amsterdam than he would have discovered at home, where many of his own friends took a negative attitude to the World Council of Churches. He and others had come to discover that the liturgical movement in the Roman Catholic Church is not simply a fresh development of romantic Gothic revivalism, in line with Dom Guéranger, the Camden Society, and the *Ecclesiologist*. It is one among several manifestations of a new relationship between clergy and laity.

No doubt some Anglo-Catholic priests have introduced fresh liturgical innovations in the last few years in the old spirit of keeping up with the latest Roman Catholic fashions. But by and large it would be ridiculous to regard the replacement of Low Mass at 8 and Sung Mass at 10.30 or 11 by a parish communion as a new development in Romanizing ritualism. The liturgical movement on the continent and in England has brought with it a new sense of active participation by the whole people of God, not only priest, servers, and choir, in the eucharistic action, not only in communion, but also in offering. Whatever criticisms can be levelled at the offertory procession, which I myself think out of place before the Prayer for the Church — it should come after the communion devotions and lead directly into the Prayer of Consecration — there can be no doubt that this aspect of the eucharistic oblation has proved to be a bond of union between Anglo-Catholics, Central Churchmen, and Evangelicals, who can agree in offering bread and wine as symbols of ourselves, our souls and bodies, of the obedience of the whole Church and the whole creation, even though they differ about the precise relation of the eucharistic offering to the sacrifice of Christ. In this development, which is now receiving much official encouragement in the Roman

Catholic Church as well as in our own, it seems to me that the aspect of medieval eucharistic doctrine which excited most resentment among the Reformers is reduced, if not superseded. The Mass is no longer regarded as something done for the people by the priest, but as an act of the whole Church in Christ, If this tendency finally prevails in the Roman Catholic Church, it must have a revolutionary effect on the relations of clergy and laity, not only in liturgy.

These Roman Catholic developments are, strictly speaking, outside my subject. What I want to emphasize is that, at the present moment, the influence of new movements among Catholics on the continent, upon Anglo-Catholics in the Church of England need not lead them in a clerical direction, or compel them to repudiate the achievement of the Reformation in liturgical worship and eucharistic doctrine. They may rather bring them to the point of seeing for the first time what the Reformers meant when they repudiated 'the Privy Mass', not only, or even primarily the Mass of a single priest and server at a side altar, which for the two or three who do participate is a corporate act, but the Mass said or sung in the sanctuary for a congregation of observers, intent on their private devotions.

Clericalism takes rather different forms in the Church of England and in the Church of Rome, but in both Churches it is the enemy of a real engagement between the Church and the modern world. The Roman Catholic view of the relationship between reason and revelation, nature and grace, is rooted in the social structure of the Roman Catholic Church, as our own more flexible approach to the problem of reason and revelation has its roots in the very different relationship between clergy and laity in England. Our clergy since the Reformation have never been a class apart. Their temptation to dominate has been more commonly felt in the pulpit than at the altar, and it seems to me probable that the Evangelical preacher has dominated his congregation rather more, on the whole, than the Anglo-Catholic priest and his High Church precursors since the eighteenth century. Now, it seems to me, the power of the pulpit is very much less felt in every quarter of the Church of England than it was in 1856 or 1906. The future of English Christianity depends on the active participation of the laity in worship, meditation, and reflection on the mysteries of the Christian revelation.

We live in an age when metaphysical speculation is at a discount. We cannot hope by metaphysical argument to prove the existence of God, either on the lines laid down by S. Thomas Aquinas, or in the manner of post-Kantian philosophies of reli-

gion. If we want to meet people where they are, we must be empiricists or existentialists, or better still both at once. We can only hope to draw men on to investigate the possibility that the Christian life is not simply an outmoded superstition, but a source of power and grace, if we can show them, not only in the dedication of individuals, but in the corporate life of the Church, that here is something worth exploring, and that the decision to engage in such an exploration is worth taking. This understanding of the situation is common to sensitive evangelists in all churches and in all schools. The difference, as it seems to me, between Roman Catholics and those Anglo-Catholics who are not, consciously or unconsciously, committed to a quasi-Roman position, is mainly this : that the Roman Catholic asks his convert to accept the decisions of church authority without question, at least in that very large field that is covered by dogmatic decisions and the regulations of ecclesiastical discipline. The Anglican asks him to grow in a tradition wider and larger than the Church of England as she now is, to repudiate nothing of scientific method and historical criticism except his determination that miracles do not happen, that God does not act in history, or — in the case of some Protestants — that the Holy Spirit had nothing to do with anything that happened between the New Testament and the Reformation, or before the rise of historical criticism.

I should like to speak first of our engagement with the unchurched enquirer, and only then of the more complex problem of the relationship of the different traditions in the Church of England to one another and to the traditions of other communions. It seems to me fair to say that in the last twenty years Anglo-Catholic laymen have been at least as actively engaged in conversation with unbelievers as Evangelicals and Modernists. I am thinking of such people as T. S. Eliot, Charles Williams, Professor Donald Mackinnon, Professor H. A. Hodges of Reading, and some contributors to the new symposium, *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, edited by Alistair MacIntyre and Antony Flew, notably Mr. Ian Crombie, Mr. Basil Mitchell and Mr. Richard Hare. Mr. Leslie Paul is a very active member of a church whose worship is in the Anglo-Catholic tradition. Something might be said of the impact on those outside the Church of the controversial writings of Professor C. S. Lewis and Miss Dorothy Sayers. They may often arouse more irritation than agreement, but they are read, and controverted. What seems to me encouraging about the present religious situation is the emergence of a rationalist apologetic, concerned to defend agnosticism against the flight from reason, and against Christian criticism. I do not always disagree

with it. We have always something to learn from our critics. But it does seem to me important that the Rationalist Press Association is now on the defensive, and that their anxiety is directed against the dangerous persuasiveness of some orthodox Christians.

I believe that those lay writers whom I mentioned, and such priests as Canon Demant and Father Patrick McLaughlin, have done more to carry on the tradition of engagement between the Church of England and secular thinking than those who have called themselves Broad Churchmen in recent years. I do not think that this is altogether new. If we look back to the nineteenth century, the growing points of sensitiveness to modern problems in the Anglican tradition were not so much the avowed Broad Churchmen, such as Arnold and Stanley, but individuals like F. D. Maurice, Hort, Westcott, R. H. Hutton and R. W. Church who, while less comfortable with High Churchmen than they probably would be to-day, were equally uncomfortable with the Liberal party. I am inclined to think that the Church of England needs some organized force to keep her latitude alive, to mark and check the tendencies of Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals to ossify in their positions. But that organized force, by virtue of its own organization, tends to its own kind of ossification. The Modernist is always tempted to fight the battles of his early manhood when the field of strife has shifted. I know this from my own experience, though I have never thought of myself as a theological modernist. I am a modernist where the arts are concerned, and I now realize that this puts me at some disadvantage in the appreciation of new poets who have begun to write in the last ten or fifteen years.

Parties are very dangerous things, in theology and in literary criticism. The parties in the Church of England seem to me in some important respects more on the defensive than distinct denominations. They are more afraid of giving ground in their home bases. Some Low Churchmen are more chary of the presence of children at the eucharist than Presbyterians or Plymouth Brethren. Most High Churchmen, not extreme, are stricter about the fast before communion than the Church of Rome. Modernists, I imagine, lose face by appearing in a clerical collar or wearing a cassock. All this is very human, but not therefore unchanging. Can we look forward to a day when modern churchmen are more anxious to talk over the frontier to the unchurched than to defend their own right to suspend belief, and Anglo-Catholics more zealous for the integration of whole persons in a living Church and a growing tradition than to mould men and women to a pattern of belief and practice? Is that day already dawning? I think it is.

I cannot end without reference to the traditional practical

difference between High and Low Church in relation to those who used to be called the Protestant Nonconformists. I should like to remind you that when that battle began in 1689, nearly all Low Churchmen were more or less Modernists. The few high Calvinists in the Church of England were High Churchmen in ecclesiastical politics. It appears to me from my own study of that period that the Low Churchmen did not really want organic union, but general intercommunion between Protestants. High Churchmen, because they cared for the unity of the Church, were more severe on the sin of schism, but more anxious for schemes of reunion. This anxiety led them to insist upon a unification of the ministry on an episcopal basis, because this alone afforded a hope of healing the great Western schism between Rome and the Reformation, and the earlier, older schisms between episcopal churches in East and West. Insistence on the Apostolic Succession as an essential condition for the validity of sacraments grew out of this. It was not, so to speak, in the foreground of consciousness for anyone in the West, Roman Catholic or Protestant, until the first serious overtures for reunion began in the second half of the seventeenth century.

It seems to me that if we desire the organic unity of the whole Church, not in or under a centralized organization, but with a universally recognized, interchangeable ministry of the word and sacraments, the historic episcopate still affords the only possible basis. I see no change in the attitude of Anglo-Catholics to general intercommunion with Free Churchmen in England. Even if the Methodists took episcopacy into their system, they would still be a separated body until their episcopacy was integrated with our own. But it may be that Anglo-Catholics are becoming more aware of difficulties in drawing a hard and fast line between Swedish Lutherans, who have an Apostolic Succession, and Danes and Germans, who have an episcopacy, but not in a regular line. It may be possible in the next half-century for Scottish Episcopalians and Presbyterians to come together again in a union of Episcopal order and Presbyterian discipline. We may begin to recognize the possibility that an episcopal succession can be transmitted through colleges of presbyters exercising episcopal powers. Much depends on the possibility of an agreement on the nature of ministerial priesthood, and of sacrifice in the eucharist, between the Presbyterians, the Lutherans, and ourselves. I myself believe that the gap between Presbytery as interpreted by Professor Torrance, and Episcopacy as interpreted by the Archbishop of York, may be narrower than we have been accustomed to suppose.

I am sceptical of the view often advanced in ecumenical circles, that the Catholic-Protestant chasm is the greatest in Christendom. There is a clear line between Rome and the rest, and another line more difficult to trace between those who believe that the Catholic Church is visible, at least in one of her aspects, and ought to be one, and those who regard reunion as no more than a development of existing forms of collaboration between gathered Churches. A recent discussion in the *Ecumenical Review* has brought this to the surface, and made it clear that some Protestants think that the World Council of Churches has unhappily refused to develop into federal union of intercommunicating bodies, and is in this way stultifying itself. This seems to me a logical position for Baptists and Congregationalists, and it may have an attraction for some Methodists and some Presbyterians, but it does not seem to me compatible with either the Lutheran or the Reformed traditions in their classical forms. Low Church Anglicans have, at certain times, leaned in this direction, with Low Presbyterians and Low Lutherans, but the reunion schemes in India and Ceylon seem to me to point the opposite way, towards organic union as the object of our striving, by whatever means we seek to attain the unification of the ministry and the consolidation of Christian doctrine.

In the last resort Christian reunion is not a human work. When we look back on the history of the ecumenical movement in the last sixty years, nothing seems to me more astonishing than the fact that it has survived that radical change in the whole philosophical and theological atmosphere of which I spoke at the beginning of my paper. In the beginning it must have looked like a Liberal movement. It still contains a Liberal element, but its whole centre of emphasis has been decisively changed. Other changes may be ahead of us, if the iron curtain dissolves and the Orthodox Churches once more play a decisive part in the movement, as they did in the years leading from Edinburgh to Lausanne. There is another iron curtain that in some places is wearing thin. Already, it seems to me, the theological debate on the issues of the Reformation has changed its tone as Kierkegaard, Barth, and Cullman begin to exercise a positive influence on Roman Catholic theological thinking, and Thomism gives place to the Catholic existentialism of Marcel, who was brought up as a Protestant.

When Professor Paul Tillich speaks of 'the Protestant era', he seems to mean that initiative in intellectual and spiritual changes lies with Protestant churches and Protestant countries, but 'the Protestant principle' in his sense of the word is not confined to Protestant Christianity. We are now, I think, beginning

to see that the Reformation was not so much a revolt against religious tradition as against the incorporation in the Christian religious tradition of elements derived from classical culture. The dissolution of the scholastic synthesis gave rise to modern science not only in Protestant countries, but in Italy and France. The problem for our day is to develop a new relationship between the scientific attitude to the evidence of our senses, and the testimony of the Church, not only in the Scriptures, but in her whole historical experience, to the revelation of God in Christ. This problem is common to Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Eastern Orthodox (especially for instance in Russia, Syria, and Greece). Roman Catholics and Fundamentalists are at some disadvantages, because their traditional teachings have committed them to certain negative conclusions, but in point of historical method, those negative conclusions are constantly being qualified among Roman Catholics at least, when they work on the lives of the saints or the Dead Sea scrolls. Even Fundamentalists seem nowadays to be less concerned to reject historical criticism than to uphold a particular view of the atonement which in fact seems to be post-Reformation. I do not believe that the cause of scientific criticism can be forwarded by claims on behalf of any group to possess a monopoly of critical candour. Let us continue to contend for scientific honesty, but recognize its presence wherever we find it, especially among those who come to opposite conclusions from our own.

AMERICA AND THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY

By The Rev. H. C. Snape, M.A., Vicar of Whalley

ALMOST every European is struck with astonishment and surprise when he learns that not only is the American republic being swept by a religious revival but also that the revival is not yet by any means exhausted, that every religious denomination is expanding in numbers, prestige, and influence. To quote from 'Information Service' issued by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. dated December 25, 1954, 'More than 94 millions of the people of our nation are members of churches or synagogues. More than 30 millions of new members have been added in the past fourteen years. A century ago one out of six Americans was a church member. . . . Since 1920, church membership has increased twice as fast as the population; it has doubled while the population increased by 50 per cent. In 1940 less than one-half of the people were church members; to-day 60 per cent. are. Last September this figure had become 60.3 per cent., the total being over 97 millions.' Every visitor to churches in America will testify that what he sees supports these figures. Their large congregations, their finely equipped parish houses, with theatre, dance-halls, reception room, class-rooms, dining room and kitchen, their staffs of clergy, secretaries, cooks and menials, signify that religious worship and institutional religion measured in terms of finance and numbers have assured a growing importance in the pattern of the American way of life.

This feature surprises the traveller from the Old World not only because in spite of sporadic revivals the churches both on the continent and in Britain seem to have declined steadily in the last forty years in numbers and influence but also because the general picture of American life as presented to us here through the film and the printed word is that of a society exclusively secular in outlook, completely dominated by the standards of size, speed, mass, comfort, and ease. There is a truth in this conception of American life prevalent among us. American thought and practise ever grow more secular. Almost thirty distinguished Americans were asked not long ago to enumerate the hundred most significant events in history in order of importance. Columbus' discovery of America headed the list while the birth and death of Christ came fourteenth. To me the most significant building in New York is the Rockefeller Centre or radio city. It is claimed

to be a city within a city. 33,000 people earn and eat their daily bread there; they can purchase all their needs without leaving the building. It is an investment in property made by a peculiarly American foundation, whose income is used for cultural and philanthropic ends. Among the sculpture and paintings which adorn the building are Prometheus, Atlas, 'Man and Nature', 'Man's Accomplishments', 'Past Present and Future' symbolised by aeroplanes in flight, 'Progress in Transportation'. 'These be thy gods, O Zion', I was going to exclaim until I noticed one mural depicting the transfigured Christ delivering the Sermon on the Mount, as it would appear, to a diverse audience of the wealthy, the poor and the suffering. Beside the mural are the words 'Man's ultimate destiny depends not on whether he can learn new lessons or make new discoveries and conquests but on the acceptance of the lesson taught him close upon 2,000 years ago'. That is the only reference to the Christian faith in what is perhaps the most significant expression in steel and stone of the faith of vitality and courage of modern America. As Will Herberg writes in his book *Protestant—Catholic—Jew*, to which in the composition of this paper I am greatly in debt, on the one hand the evidence of religious revival and expanding religious institutions cannot be written off as shallow emotionalism or religiosity; on the other hand Americans think, feel, and act in terms quite obviously secularist at the very time that they exhibit every sign of a widespread religious revival! If we can solve this paradox of the people of a continent, who appear to us, as far as outward conformity is concerned, to grow more religious as the century passes but simultaneously in thought, act, and feeling, grow more secular, we shall, I think, go some way to discovering why we at home certainly become more secularised but except for a minority have ceased to be concerned with religion at all. If it is right to suppose—as I believe it is—that the spiritual and cultural centre of the western world has shifted from Rome, Paris and London to New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, with the addition of Boston and Princeton, the resolution of this paradox will give us some assistance in predicting what forms prayer and worship are likely to take in the future and what their impact upon the life of men is likely to be.

About 1900 Israel Zangwill wrote, 'America is God's crucible, the great melting-pot where all the races of Europe are melting and re-forming—God is making the American' (The Melting-Pot, Act 1). At the very time when this was written the flow of the mobile human mass from Europe was diminishing and had begun to assume a perceptible and relatively constant shape in the

attitudes and manner of the middle-class urbanised society which we know to-day as America. The western frontier, which for over a century had been the most potent factor in that moulding process, had vanished into the Pacific ocean. Twenty years later legislation, whose outward and visible signs were the disappointments and tragedies of Ellis island, reduced the flow of immigration to an insignificant trickle. Not the least of the attitudes and manners to be shaped by the frontier and the continuous stream of immigation were those belonging to the practice of religion. The Declaration of Independence which, as I read it in the library of Congress, struck me as a polite apology for an unfortunate but necessary breach of good manners and civilised living, proclaims freedom of worship as one of man's inalienable rights and accordingly the American constitution forbids the establishment of any religion. Hence to this day no religious instruction of any kind may be given in a publicly maintained school, a corollary from the terms of the constitution which has been explicitly declared by a decision of the Supreme Court. Such prestige and power as the episcopal church had enjoyed as an extension of the Church of England it threw away by showing itself to be a Tory corporation which prayed for George III. Boston was content with enlightenment and culture, but the disinherited and dissatisfied moved out west; they stood in need of independence, faith, and hope; with no traditions to guide them they looked to their own conscience and intelligence for divine direction. At the same time they had high hopes of the new Jerusalem peopled by the elect of God. Messianism belongs to the religion of the nomad. Hence the Protestantism of Calvin and Wesley found its most fruitful soil in the ever moving frontier of the United States. Where capital was short and pleasures few, that religion, which made no demand upon money or men for its ministry and not only afforded all the joy and consolation accompanying enthusiasm, abounded and flourished, blossoming forth often into many curious and ephemeral sects. There had been revivals among the Puritans before the revolution, but it was the succession of revivals beginning with what is called the Great Awakening between 1730 and 1740 and lasting for 150 years which have determined the pattern of American religion. The Baptists with their emphasis on adult conversion and the doctrine of election have been the largest beneficiaries. They are to-day the largest Protestant denomination; they swarm across the Southern states where exists what is called the Bible Belt; they are also, as you will know, the victims of a schism on the issue of fundamentalism and membership of the World Council of Churches. The Methodists are their co-partners in the fruits of the frontier man's religion, largely

because they permit a lay-ministry and accept democracy as the divine order of government.

In accordance with Troeltsch's law the frontier religion was the work of the lower-strata of the population but, as Herberg points out, they were not the same people as the disinherited proletariat of Europe, but, if poor at the moment, were potentially men of substance; they were on the frontier because they believed in themselves as well as God. Impatient of traditional forms and ceremonies and of any kind of institutional authority they looked to the Bible and their own interpretation of it rather than a creed. They heartily subscribed to the line 'By their fruits ye shall know them', and the fruits were to be found in transformed lives in righteousness shown in mart and factory blessed by Providence with prosperity—the Bible even if it is the Old Testament proclaimed it should be so—generosity and philanthropy. It is only a rare genius like Abraham Lincoln who can, with the cunning which gives success on the frontier or the gold field, seek Christ and preserve his integrity.

As the frontier moved ever further west, it left behind in place of the rugged pioneer of small means the prosperous farmer and successful capitalist, and correspondingly in place of the field preacher and the spontaneous effervescence of evangelical conversion the settled church under the direction of the organiser and the institutionalist. Conversion itself becomes a part of the institutional set-up; the liberating power of the Bible is quenched by a pedantic literalism: the grace of a re-created life is supplanted by the repulsive pride of a New England conscience. To quote Richard Niebuhr (*The Kingdom of God in America*, p. 178) 'With the loss of the sense of the common touch in proclaiming the kingdom of Christ, sectional, racial and cultural differences assume increasing importance. The more attention was concentrated upon the church, the greater became the tendency towards schism.' Apart from this inward tendency towards schism in what may be called the first stage of crystallization American Protestantism met with external forces making for schism. Churches tended to be formed according to race, colour and culture. Only the supremacy of English as the traditional and vulgar tongue prevented ethnic differences after long and bitter struggles from being a source of permanent schism. To-day, however, the melting-pot has nearly completed its work. Save for the fact that the prominent members of the Scandinavian and Lutheran Churches bear names showing their ethnic origin and that there is an English flavour about an Episcopalian church and similarly a Scottish flavour about a Presbyterian church, all

the Protestant denominations have become americanized. Internal conflict also came through the issue of slavery and the Civil War which rent the Baptists, Methodists and the Presbyterians into Northern and Southern bodies: only to-day are those divisions being healed. The abolition of slavery and the steady flow of negroes to the North accentuated the difference of colour. The Protestant Churches will be the last communities, it is reckoned, to accept desegregation not so much because the white resents the intrusion of the coloured Christian but rather the reverse. An American sociologist, Dr. William Sweet, tells us why. The Church means more to the Negro than any other institution, since only in his Church has he had opportunity for self-expression. (Sweet, *The Protestant Churches Annals*, p. 49.)

The early history of American Protestantism as an evangelical movement on the frontier left indelible marks which are characteristic of religion in America to-day. (1) It is a lay-man's religion. The American constitution laid the foundation of a religious but lay-state. It acknowledges belief in God and such was Eisenhower's declaration in his inaugural address, but it owns neither bishop, priest or ruler as a necessary intermediary between God and man. The Churches are managed by the laity and that is true even of the Episcopal Church, where in fact if not formally (save for a church which is a mission) there is a presbyterian system of government. Also in the Episcopal Church episcopal authority is strictly limited and there is, of course, no archbishop or provincial government. (2) The Wesleyan and Calvinist denominations because they met the spiritual needs of the frontiersman were destined to have an equal footing, and in numbers and wealth to be superior to the daughter of the Established Church in England. With no inherited social distinctions corresponding to membership of a church and no church claiming to be the church of the whole nation, the churches of America have been able to meet the rapid changes brought about by urban industrialization. (3) Religion was implicitly accepted as the practice of a faith which, far from prescribing as a supreme authority the conclusions which thought should support and the moral values which should colour action, itself served men in the content of their lives and transfigured moral and intellectual values which had already pragmatically justified their acceptance. Faith and hope enriched but did not create the virtues of industry, thrift, and integrity, which themselves were justified by the fruits of material success. Out of the acceptance of religion as a servicable partner in life's other pursuits springs the paradox of increasing secularization and

increasing religiousness which is such a prevalent and striking feature of American life to-day.

The subsequent development of American Protestantism has only served to accentuate these initial features. The first crystallization of frontier evangelical fervour left a variety of Protestant sects and denominations, self-righteous communities, showing to the world the most unattractive aspects of a bleak and bigoted Puritanism. There were times in the middle of the nineteenth century when it looked as if Protestantism in America would survive only as a decaying brake to the forces of civilisation and culture. Abraham Lincoln, perhaps the only man in history who can be called a Christian statesman, disowned membership of any Christian church or sect. But industrialisation and cultural development as it were softened up the dogmatic and legalistic fences of the sects. At the same time there was operating what Marcus Hansen, an American sociologist, has called the principle of third-generation interest formulated in the phrase 'what the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember'. The third generation has lost all the traits of language, manners and culture belonging to the family's country of origin and feels itself rootless; religion alone affords any threads of tradition, a background and environment, to which they feel they belong and in which they can find themselves. A rough analogy may be drawn between the American churches in the twentieth century and the English public schools. What the latter did for the grandson of the successful industrialist the former have done for the grandson of the successful American immigrant. Through membership of a church the descendant of an immigrant finds himself a true American, gains an honourable social niche in the community, nay more, himself becomes a forceful example of the American way of life. Instead of being directed by his conscience he is acutely sensitive to his social culture and spiritual environment. Like a public school boy he knows what is done and what is not done. He is a conformist and yet as we shall see he is also an individualist. All religions grouped under the three faiths of Protestant, Catholic and Jew are practised as a necessary part of the American way of life of which individualism, initiative, flexibility and enterprise are also essentially characteristics. To quote Herburg (op. cit. p. 51) 'while America knows no national or cultural minorities except as temporary, transitional phenomena, it does know a free variety and plurality of religions; and it is as members of a religious group that the great mass of Americans identify themselves to establish their social location once they have really sloughed off their immigrant foreign-ness.'

The operation of this principle that the grandson needs what the son has lost supplies the essential clue to an understanding of religion in America. It has so softened up the dividing barriers between the churches that inter-communion and co-operation are practised on national, state, and local levels to an extent undreamt of as yet in Britain. The total support for local and state councils of churches alone in 1953 amounted to over 7,000,000 dollars. The American churchman does not consider it necessary to be concerned with the issues of episcopacy and presbyterianism. The church is a focus for educational, social and philanthropic activity. The poor, the exiled and the dispossessed owe much to the American churches.

Thirty years ago André Seigfried described Protestantism as America's only national religion and gave the warning that 'to ignore that fact is to view the country from a false angle'. This is true because the American way of life is a product of those moral attitudes and biblical interpretations with which Protestantism colours Catholicism and Judaism. While, however, Protestantism compared with the other faiths has penetrated every corner of the United States, Protestants acknowledge both of them as co-partners in the making of an American: the triple melting-pot is a common metaphor. The Catholic hierarchy know how to make the best use of the uninhibited methods of American publicity, advertisement, and pressure, and there is no doubt that the tension prevalent wherever there is a Catholic group in a Protestant environment is sharp. But the responsible Catholic officials and laity accept without equivocation the American tradition concerning the relationship between church and state as embodied in the constitution. A popular film not long ago depicted some friars in Italy welcoming unawares three American chaplains, who turn out to be respectively Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish, and subsequently imposing a fast upon themselves to promote the conversion of the two latter. An audience in Chicago composed mainly of Americans of Italian origin and therefore presumably Catholic found the friars only figures of fun. The Catholic Church in America has become Americanized and therefore to that extent assimilated to Protestantism by emphasizing activity at the expense of piety and contemplation. In fact it can be safely stated that the influence of Catholicism rests upon its social, educational and cultural activities. It is a victim of what the Pope in 1950 called 'the heresy of action'—the notion that the world can be saved by external activity (Apostolic Adhortation '*Menti Nostrae*', September 23, 1950). An American Archbishop declared 'An honest ballot and

social decorum will do more for God's glory and the salvation of souls than midnight flagellations or compostellian pilgrimages'. Every profession, interest, activity and function is provided with a Catholic institution and Catholic direction from the parish sewing circle to the Catholic Radio-Visual Educators Association. While inevitably in the fields of dogma and morals American Catholicism presents a united front it manifests every variety of political thought from Senator McCarthy's troublesome illiberalism to the anarchy of extreme Christian pacificism. It will be remembered that in 1928 the American voter preferred the austere Quaker, Herbert Hoover, to Roosevelt's happy warrior, the Catholic Al Smith. Hoover stood for Tawney's capitalists and Smith for those who were four years later to be the New Dealers. Catholics in America taken by and large are progressives in politics, not, as might be supposed from the alignment of their Europeon brethren, merely anti-communists. Unlike the Protestants until recent years they drew their strength from what were socially and economically the lowest strata of the population, the Irish and the Italian immigrants who arrived from Europe with almost nothing, very often not even with a skill or trade. Social questions are as much the concern of Catholics as Protestants. Catholics probably have a deeper understanding of them because they are more intimately acquainted with them as living issues among their people. The 'labour priest' is no novelty in America and the Roman hierarchy has adopted a bold and uncompromising lead on the issue of desegregation. If ever the American hierarchy should come to dominate in the College of Cardinals or an American sit on the papal throne, it might well be that Rome would re-define its official conception of the relationship between church and state, its social policy would be less cautious, and its attitude towards Protestantism less intolerant. For the Roman Church in America is treated with respect and its pronouncements awarded attention, not because it claims to be the Church of Christ, and its head His vice-regent on earth, but because it has become one of the three faiths of the American democracy, through which the American way of life can be followed, and Italians and Irishmen with other European Catholics can be moulded into good Americans.

This rapid survey would not be complete if some reference was not made to Judaism in America. Compared with the two Christian 'faiths' the number of its adherents is small. There are reckoned to be about 5,000,000 Jews in the United States. About 40 per cent. of that number are to be found in New York and 75 per cent. are to be found in five of the largest cities. If there were no

other reasons, on that account alone they have to be reckoned as belonging to a 'faith' ranking in influence with the other two because America is essentially an urban civilization, perhaps a metropolitical civilization. That it is so recognized may be seen from the fact that all inter-faith co-operation as it is termed is assumed to be co-operation between Protestants represented by such bodies as the Central Council of the Churches of Christ, Roman Catholics and Jews. Judaism in America betrays in an accentuated form the marks of a racial and religious tradition, which has almost entirely lost its original spiritual significance. The Synagogue, its services, and attendant societies follow the Protestant pattern. In addition to the feasts of New Year and the day of Atonement those festivals which coincide with the principal Christian festivals have come into prominence. A minor Jewish feast, Hannukah, is observed with the Jewish Santa Claus, greeting cards and expensive gifts, because it coincides with Christmas. Circumcision is scrupulously practised with the traditional ritual, while the religious coming of age at the age of thirteen has become just an occasion for a lavish social party. The second generation it appears are eager to retain their Jewish tradition as an exclusive mark—hence the emphasis on circumcision—but, where Jewish exclusiveness threatens conformity to the American way of life, they are ready to reject it. I can tell of a Protestant minister being invited to share in directing the worship of the synagogue on Christmas day and to take a part in a Jewish wedding. The paradox of an increasing external religiousness and growing secularization is more patent in Judaism than in either of the other two faiths. A young Jewish American sociologist thus describes American Jewry 'A social group with clearly marked boundaries exists, but the source of the energies that hold it separate, and of the ties that bind it together, has become completely mysterious (Herberg : op. cit., p. 213, quoted from Glazer *What Sociology Knows About American Jews*).

That statement directs us to the question which every visitor to America sooner or later asks. What is the significance of religious activity in America in the perspective of faith? What is the real object of American public worship of which externally at any rate there is such abundance? The question can only be answered with sobriety and charity if it is conceded that at all times and in all places as soon as any movement of the spirit is consolidated and crystallized by the priest and the institutionalist men come to give God worship through the pressure of many extraneous forces of which they are quite unaware. Tribal tradition, custom, and especially conformity have always been forceful agencies in pro-

moting public worship, and it is probably true that the more numerous the circle of worshippers the less potent is the immediate attraction of the apparent object of their worship.

American religion is not booming because Americans have grown in their devotion to Christ: on the other hand it cannot be dismissed as the empty religiosity of a prosperous community. Basically the operation of the law that the grandson wishes to remember what the son forgets has made membership of one of the three 'communions' or 'faiths' an essential feature of the American way of life. He cannot retain his grandfather's tongue or culture but he can retain his religious inheritance: there he finds a background in front of which he can identify himself, a milieu to which he belongs. America is no longer the land of immigrants but the triple melting-pot. To belong to the synagogue, the Protestant Church, or the Roman communion is to be an American: to be a declared atheist, agnostic or humanist is to be not quite American if not un-American; to be a Buddhist or Mohammedan is to be foreign. The American way of life implies certain beliefs which if not central to the Christian faith derive from it. Briefly they are freedom for the individual from any feudal or caste system to hammer out his own life, positive toleration of all opinions and religions, and a belief in a Supreme Being who himself guarantees such freedom and toleration.

The American cannot help but consider that the movement of the spirit which began with Abraham, through Jesus of Nazareth burst the containing walls of Judaism to spread over Europe, now gives the spiritual dynamic to the American way of life manifesting itself under the modified but inherited forms of the three faiths. The Jew in America has abandoned Pharisaism; the Roman Catholic the superiority of spirituality; the Protestant justification by faith alone, belief in judgment and depravity. All of them find in religious practices a relief and compensation to the absorbing and exhausting activity which has become the dominant character of the American way of life. Religion in its more popular forms openly offers inward peace of mind, poise, and freedom from anxiety, and it adds 'Are not these blessings necessary to success?' It may be expressed in a popular song entitled 'You have a friend upstairs' which unless it is specifically called religious, suggests other associations; or it may be by a telephone service provided by a Protestant denomination. Dial a certain number and you hear a prayer for peace and comfort. Peace of mind depends on faith so that the core of American religion seems to be the power of faith in faith, what Richard Niebuhr

has described as 'The man-centred, this worldly, lift-yourselves-by-your-own-bootstraps doctrine of New Thought and Christian Science' (Herberg, op. cit., p. 103). Faith instead of becoming the sublimation of animal-faith by looking to a transcendent object has become the conscious re-enforcement of animal faith by the practice of a technique. It may well be the expression of the abounding vitality of a people descended from men who in faith went out seeking a country. Furthermore up to now Americans have never failed to achieve the object of their desires and have known nothing but space and abundance. In these last years they have discovered that they cannot exclude themselves from the tyrannies, wars and rumours of wars both to the East and West of them. They possess neither the phlegm of the Englishman bred of a long experience of self-development within a troublesome environment, nor the hard scepticism of the long-suffering European peasant. Hence their apprehensions for the future of mankind strike deeper than we here are aware. That, I believe, is why there comes to them a desire for faith in faith. It may and often does verge on idolatry: but it is also a faith that somehow the plan of God is being accomplished and that His ways are those of mercy and love. Science, economics, and politics have failed to allay the fears for the future which the American feels much more acutely than we do just because his sensitiveness and his imagination have not been blunted and dimmed by hard experience. He believes in the future but is aware that his belief needs confirmation. It is perhaps significant that the community of atomic scientists at Oak Ridge, Tennessee—the Harwell of U.S.A.—rejected a proposal in 1953 that they should be given municipal autonomy, while in the same year among a population of 31,000 were to be found thirty-seven congregations holding regular services and engaged in all the manifold activities of an American church. American churchmen may not be sin-conscious but they are certainly self-critical; many of their professional theologians have exposed the failings of American religion in strong terms. The future of American religion puzzles the resident as much as the visitor. But the frugal mind of a visitor from the Old World could not help but be appalled by the prodigal use which is being made of the natural resources of the country, symbolized by the mountains of disused motor-cars to be seen wherever you go. When it is found that conservation must replace profligacy, a revolution of standards and modes of living with all manner of social re-adjustments are to be expected. Faith will be shaken and perhaps tried in the fire.

To me however has been assigned a much more formidable task than predicting the future of religion in America, viz. the future of religion itself. Of course the future of religion cannot be predicted. But we may read the signs of the times and possibly they are rather to be found in America than anywhere else. For the Americans frankly exploit tendencies of which we are either unconscious or are ashamed to acknowledge. Their vitality leads them to experiment where timidity born of experience leads us politely to hold back. An ironmaster builds an edifice as massive and imposing as Durham Cathedral to be the world's centre of the Swedenborg cult. Evanston is not only the beautiful suburb of Chicago where the World Council of Churches met in 1955; it is also known for possessing the largest Bahá'í temple in the world. A certain Mr. Charles Smith, a lawyer by profession, writes two portentous volumes on 'Sensism, the philosophy of the West reversing Plato and Descartes and presenting a new world view appropriate to the atomic age'!

If Toynbee is right the civilisation in which our lot is cast is in a decline. But at the same time it should be possible to perceive some of the conditions to which any re-birth of faith will have to conform. All those forms which have come to be traditionally regarded as essential to the Christian faith are losing any living significance for all save those who have a professional interest in their preservation or are traditionalists by temperament. Hence in America there is not only interdenominational co-operation on all levels; there is also inter-faith co-operation. Denominational barriers have been broken down because the dividing issues have ceased to have significance and the social distinctions which may have existed between one great denomination and another are rapidly vanishing. The classic Christian doctrines have become in large measure the *arcana* of the hierarchy of a professional ministry. Religious movements such as moral re-armament and neobiblicism sweep across all denominations. There is a universal tendency to refuse a monopoly of grace and truth to anyone. What can only be described as the secularisation of religion so manifest in America, and indeed incipient wherever in the world religion is vital, seems to imply at the very least that the reign of religious belief and practice as the sovereign architect of human thought and action is over. Politics, morality, science and art are independent realms of human action. Religious belief, although it is concerned with that element in man which transcends all others, has up to now attempted to transcend the other activities of man by making assent to an intellectual form or cultural authority a condition of grace. As the American seeks for peace and faith he dumbly acknowledges

that beyond the material world he loves so much there is the working of a mystical elemental energy needed to make us whole. St. Paul found it personalised and knew its possession as being in Christ. Religious belief is coming not to attempt to transcend all our working beliefs but to transfigure them. The ancient symbols of belief have lost their significance because they were taken to represent external realities whole and entire. They will acquire new meaning when they are customarily assumed only to point to what may be mystically known. Further it will be recognised that there are no universally valid eternal symbols.

With the frank recognition of a mystical element not just in religion but in all life there will go a practical element. 'By their fruits ye shall know them whether they be of God' might well be inscribed below the Statue of Liberty. No one will deny that American churchmen seem to regard the denominations as undertakings which should be judged by the size of their communions and the wealth shown by their balance-sheets. That however is only one aspect of the American's pragmatic mind. Every American church is prepared to be judged by what it does to supply the needs of others : every American churchman assumes that he has to pay for churchmanship. He expects from religious belief practical consequences both internal and external. American church leaders have for fifty years been much concerned with the social gospel. In the last two decades they have felt the impact of the Barthian movement not so much in the sphere of theology as in that of its social and practical consequences to the working out of which Americans like Reinhold Niebuhr and John Bennett have given so much attention, as may be discovered from *The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel*, by Paul A. Carter. Can dialectical theology take root in the American churches without becoming a new variety of biblical literalism or the language of a new cult and bear fruit in shaping the layman's basic political beliefs and social values? Then at long last collective no less than personal relationships might be considered as fields for Christian action.

Mystical and practical seem to be qualities the American expects of his religion. Its expression is to be found not in mechanically effective signs but in symbols explicitly significant as pointers to transcendental reality suggesting overtones of what cannot be directly heard. These seem to be the qualities which Canon Raven reports that he has found in South India. Must they not also be the qualities of any religion which, founded in the mystical and Johannine tradition of the Eastern church, will transform the materialistic assumptions of the Soviet State into the acceptance of freedom and love as cosmic and social principles? And if Schweitzer is right

practical mysticism is the religion of Jesus and of Paul, the only abstraction which can be used to define the religion of the Christ. It may of course turn out that only the least desirable qualities of religion as it is found in America will survive and that the residue will be concealed idolatry masquerading as faith in faith. Religion then would be indeed the opium of the people but only because the people love to have it so. But Herberg can write (op. cit. p. 288/9) 'Among the younger people, particularly among the more sensitive young men and women on the campuses of this country, there are unmistakable indications of an interest in, and concern with, religion that goes far beyond the demands of mere social "belonging".' The old world too, depressed and low-geared as its religious life seems to be, is firm in its conviction that reverence, awe and humility are of the essence of faith in God. Faith in faith can easily become reverence for life. But true reverence for life is to know that we are made destroyers and murderers, or sinners if you like, as well as bearers of the Spirit and sons of God. When the Old World ceases to regard religion as the Prayer-book regards marriage, a remedy against sin, and the New World perceives that the practical concerns of religious faith and indeed of life itself are more than just what is to hand, faith in God will be re-born strong enough to reveal new planes of being and to support new orientations of living. It needs no wisdom to prophesy that He will be the God revealed in Him who came that they might have life and have it abundantly.

THE ANGLICAN IDEAL AND THE FUTURE

By Norman Sykes, F.B.A., Dixie Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Cambridge

'THOUGH for no other cause, yet for this, that posterity may know we have not loosely through silence permitted things to pass away as in a dream, there shall be for men's information extant thus much concerning the present state of the Church of God established amongst us, and their careful endeavour which would have upheld the same.' These introductory words to the first book *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* must have recurred to the minds of faithful sons of the Church of England at divers times in its subsequent history. In Hooker's own day indeed the threat to its survival from the side both of Recusant and Puritan was such as to evoke the famous thanksgiving in the dedication to his fifth book, ' By the goodness of Almighty God and his servant Elizabeth we are '. Nor, even when these dangers had been overpast, was the prospect other than stormy; for the seventeenth century saw a still more furious assault upon the Ecclesia Anglicana, once again from the dual enemies of Rome and of Protestant dissent; an assault which succeeded for a time during the Interregnum in dispossessing it, proscribing its liturgy and exiling many of its leaders. Moreover, when the restoration of the Stuart monarchy brought back the Church of England and witnessed the completion of the long history of its reformation in the 1662 revision of the Book of Common Prayer, the peril was not yet finally averted. Within a generation of this happy event the threat from Rome assumed an even greater urgency under James II; and deliverance from this danger was bought in the Revolution of 1688 at the price of the failure of Comprehension and the enactment of Toleration. Throughout the kaleidoscopic fortunes of the hundred and thirty years dividing the accession of Elizabeth I from that of William and Mary, therefore, the Anglican *via media* was menaced by the opposing yet mutually inconsistent traditions of the post-Tridentine Church of Rome and of Protestant dissent. In the present day, when its witness seems imperilled by the rival forces of Roman Infallibility and Protestant Fundamentalism, there may be some lesson, if not of comfort yet of exhortation, to be drawn from a consideration of its history; but first some of the salient characteristics of its *via media* must be selected to point the moral and adorn the tale. Three of these features indeed select themselves; the comprehensiveness of its theological formulae; the position of its clergy; and the part played by its laity.

I

The comprehensiveness of its theological definitions is clearly evidenced by the Articles of Religion. As Thomas Fuller quaintly wrote :

> 'Some have unjustly taxed the composers for too much favour extended in their large expressions, clean through the contexture of these Articles, which should have tied men's consciences up closer in more strict and particularizing propositions; which, indeed, proceeded from their commendable moderation. Children's clothes ought to be made of the biggest, because afterwards their bodies will grow up to their garments. Thus, the Articles of this English Protestant Church, in the infancy thereof, they thought good to draw up in general terms, foreseeing that posterity would grow up to fill the same. I mean, these holy men did prudently pre-discover that differences in judgments would unavoidably happen in the Church, and were loath to un-church any, and drive them off from an ecclesiastical communion for such petty differences; which made them pen the Articles in comprehensive words to take in all, who, differing in the branches, meet in the root of the same religion.'

The truth of this characterization may be seen by comparing the changes between the 42 Articles in Edward VI's reign and the 39 of Elizabeth I's; or by comparing the English Articles with those of the Church of Ireland of 1615; or by comparing them with the Lambeth Articles of Archbishop Whitgift of 1595. Equally marked in this respect is the contrast between the English Articles on the one hand and the decrees of the Council of Trent and the several Confessions of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches on the other hand. Indeed, this elasticity of the Anglican confession was the pride of English churchmen in subsequent ages when engaged in irenical discussion with the foreign Protestant Churches. In his unwearying endeavours to compose the dissensions between the Swiss Reformed Churches in the early decades of the eighteenth century concerning subscription to theological standards, Archbishop Wake stated and defended the Anglican position in typical terms :

> 'The Church of England has been very exemplary in this respect; and we have felt the good effect of it in that peace we enjoy among our ministers, notwithstanding their known differences of opinion in many considerable Articles of Christian doctrine. The 39 Articles, published about the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth and collected from those which had been set forth in the last year of King Edward VI with several prudent amendments with respect to the end I am now speaking of, have been subscribed more than once in our public synods, indifferently, by bishops and clergy of different persuasions. We have left everyone to interpret them in his own sense; and they are indeed so generally framed, that they may without an equivocation, have more senses than one fairly put upon them.'

After instancing various episodes of controversy concerning the Articles, Wake summarized his conclusions that

> 'our most eminent divines have many of them thought and even declared it in writing, that these Articles were designed by the Church rather as Articles of public peace and to set bounds to men's preaching or writing or instructing the people, than as doctrinal points to be professedly believed by every minister of our Church; a sense which, if followed, no one can complain of any hardship put upon him by his being required to subscribe to them.'

This latitude of interpretation has been one of the characteristics differentiating the Church of England, and the maintenance of which is vital to its good estate. Nor should its goodly heritage be forgotten. It was the judicious Hooker who, in opposing a Puritan bibliolatry, stated the rightful regard to be paid both to ecclesiastical tradition and to human reason. Indeed, for him

> 'the general and perpetual voice of man is as the sentence of God himself. For that which all men have at all times learned, Nature herself must needs have taught, and God being the Author of Nature, her voice is but his instrument.'

More particularly he insisted on the province of reason as interpreter of the Bible. 'To go from the books of Scripture to the sense and meaning thereof . . . that which by right exposition buildeth up Christian faith, being misconstrued breedeth error: between true and false construction, the difference reason must shew.' Nor would he allow any contradiction between the Spirit which inspired the writers of Scripture and the same Spirit enlightening the reason of men to interpret them.

> 'In the nature of reason itself there is no impediment but that the self-same Spirit which revealeth the things that God hath set down in his law may also be thought to aid and direct men in finding out by the light of reason what laws are expedient to be made for the guiding of his Church over and besides them that are in Scripture.'

Since therefore

> 'a number of things there are, for which the Scripture hath not provided by any law, but left them unto the careful discretion of the Church, we are to search out how the Church in these cases may be well directed to make that provision by laws which is most convenient and fit. And what is so in these cases partly Scripture and partly reason must teach to discern.'

The tradition of Hooker was continued in the Cambridge Platonists, to whom the spirit of man was indeed the candle of the Lord; and it has found contemporary expression in the 1938 *Report on Doctrine in the Church of England*. It was a profound misfortune that the outbreak of the second world war in the year

following its publication, by turning attention properly to other and more immediately urgent problems, consigned this Report to an ill-deserved oblivion. In face of the widespread post-war vogue of fundamentalism, both biblical and ecclesiastical, the Report should be rescued in the interests of the traditional Anglican comprehensiveness and latitude of interpretation.

The second factor in moulding the Anglican ideal has been the position of its clergy and the relatively high degree of independence enjoyed by them in respect both of the episcopate and of their patrons. The reasons for this go far back into history; on the one hand to the prevalence of the proprietary church, and on the other to the impropriation of many churches by lay patrons as a result of the dissolution of the monasteries. As a result of these developments, the beneficed clergyman, once instituted, has been removable only upon legal process and has been free from undue pressure both from bishop and patron. Alike in his teaching and in his conduct of public worship, he has enjoyed a degree of independence almost without parallel in other churches of Christendom. It cannot be denied, of course, that this privilege has been abused from time to time and has produced inconveniences to the good estate of the Church. On the other hand, however, it has created and maintained a tradition of individual responsibility and freedom which has contributed much to the esteem in which the clerical order has generally been held.

Allied with this factor of the position of the clergy has been the part played by the laity in the effecting of the religious settlement of Elizabeth I and continued throughout the post-Reformation history of the Church of England. In 1559, the Convocation of Canterbury passed a series of resolutions, including one formally denying the right of the laity to concern themselves with matters relating to the faith, sacraments and discipline of the Church, which were the proper province of the bishops only. The reply of the laity to this manifesto was the intiative of Parliament in regard to the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity; and recent research has shewn that this initiative was the work of a resolute Puritan group in the House of Commons, which thwarted and frustrated the queen's programme for an act of supremacy only during the first parliamentary session and the postponement of the vexed question of liturgy until a second session. The importance of the part thus played by the laity of the Church, for so the high court of parliament at that time conceived itself, was emphasized repeatedly by Figgis:

> 'Thus it is the lay power which is ultimately supreme in the Reformation theory . . . Now this fact must be faced, for it affords the only serviceable theory of continuity.'

And again:

> 'The laity are an active, not a passive, part of the Church. To Hooker, all power flows from the people to the prince. If this be not admitted, I do not believe that it is ultimately possible to argue for our continuity.'

It is both interesting and important to understand the ground on which Hooker based his position.

> 'It is undoubtedly a thing even natural, that all free and independent societies should themselves make their own laws, and that this power should belong to the whole, not to any certain part, of a politic body, though haply some one part may have greater sway in that action than the rest; which thing being generally fit and expedient in the making of all laws, we see no cause why to think otherwise in laws concerning the service of God . . .
>
> It will therefore be perhaps alleged, that a part of the verity of Christian religion is to hold the power of making ecclesiastical laws a thing appropriated unto the clergy in their synods; and that whatsoever is by their only voices agreed upon, it needeth no further approbation to give unto it the strength of a law: as may plainly appear by the canons of that first most venerable assembly, where those things which the Apostles and James had concluded, were afterward published and imposed upon the churches of the Gentiles abroad as laws, the records thereof remaining still in the book of God for a testimony that the power of making ecclesiastical laws belongeth to the successors of the Apostles, the bishops and prelates of the Church of God . . .
>
> As now the state of the Church doth stand, kings being not then that which they now are, and the clergy not now that which they then were till it be proved that some special law of Christ hath for ever annexed unto the clergy alone the power to make ecclesiastical laws, we are to hold it a thing most consonant with equity and reason, that no ecclesiastical law be made in a Christian commonwealth, without consent as well of the laity as of the clergy, but least of all without the consent of the highest power . . .
>
> The Parliament of England together with the Convocation annexed thereunto, is that whereupon the very essence of all government within this kingdom doth depend; it is even the body of the whole realm; it consisteth of the king and of all that within the land are subject unto him; for they are all there present, either in person or by such as they have voluntarily derived their very personal right unto . . .
>
> The most natural and religious course in making laws is, that the matter of them be taken from the judgment of the wisest in those things which they are to concern. In matters of God, to set down a form of public prayer, a solemn confession of the articles of Christian faith, rites and ceremonies meet for the exercise of religion; it were unnatural not to think the pastors and bishops of our souls a great deal more fit than men of secular trades and callings; howbeit, when all which the wisdom of all sorts can do is done for devising of laws in the Church, it is the general consent of all that giveth them the form and vigour of laws, without which they could be no more unto us than the counsels of physicians to the sick; well might they seem as wholesome admonitions and instructions, but laws they could never be without consent of the whole Church, which is the only thing that bindeth each member of the Church to be guided by them . . . Wherefore to define and determine even

of the Church's affairs by way of assent and approbation, as laws are defined of, in that right of power which doth give them the force of laws; thus to define of our own Church regiment, the Parliament of England hath competent authority.'

II

It may, however, be asked, wearily, whether these observations are more or other than echoes of old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago? How does this threefold strand of theological comprehensiveness, the position of the clergy and the part to be played by the laity relate to our present situation and the evident dangers to the Anglican ideal? It must be the province of the rest of this paper to essay an answer to this question. Of the imperative necessity to re-establish the theological comprehensiveness of the Church of England there can be no doubt, in face of the rising tide of fundamentalism. That prescient chronicler and critic, the author of the Preface of the current number of *Crockford*, remarks a tendency amongst the conservative wings of both the Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic schools of churchmanship to remove the historical facts of Christianity from the scrutiny of the accepted processes of historical criticism and investigation; and points out the subtle danger to its traditional character therefrom. He continues to commend the aim of this Union to present 'the Christian Gospel in the light of modern knowledge and in the idiom of today', as one 'with which all who have the evangelization of our country at heart must agree', and as 'an imperative aim for all who recognize that Christianity is an historical religion'. Further, he affirms 'the need for a group of people in the Church who are specially dedicated to this task'. It is true indeed that he takes this Union to task severely for its failure to fulfil this responsibility adequately; but he concludes with a recommendation which is worthy of attention. 'Those who called themselves "liberal evangelicals" or "liberal catholics", came nearer to performing this essential service; and it is much to be desired that there should be close contact and co-operation between the heirs of these two schools'.

The provision of a platform for this close contact and co-operation should surely be the particular province of this Union. For the common ground on which liberal evangelicals and liberal catholics may meet cannot be other than their liberalism; and a society whose specific aim it is to promote this attitude of mind and approach, should be able so to adapt itself as to constitute the meeting-place for such fruitful co-operation. It must be remembered that the Anglo-Catholic tradition historically embraced what

may be called this principle of latitude of interpretation of theological questions. The words of S. R. Gardiner in regard to the ideals of Archbishop Laud need to be recalled to mind.

> 'It is little that every parish church in the land still . . . presents a spectacle which realises his hopes. It is far more that his refusal to submit his mind to the dogmatism of Puritanism and his appeal to the cultivated intelligence for the solution of religious problems has received an ever-increasing response, even in regions in which his memory is devoted to contemptuous obloquy.'

And again, the Laudians, according to Gardiner's interpretation, were

> 'intellectually the Liberal churchmen of the age. They stood between two infallibilities — the infallibility of Calvinism and the infallibility of Rome — not indeed casting off entirely the authority of the past, but, at least in a considerable sphere of thought, asking for evidence and argument at each step which they took, and daring to remain in uncertainty when reason was not satisfied.'

This tradition was continued in the post-Restoration Caroline divines, as the recent study of *The High Church Party* by Brother George Every has shewn, in regard, for example, to the ideal of Comprehension and in the cultivation of friendly relationship with foreign Protestant churches. Furthermore, when the panic-fear of liberalism which characterized the first generation of the Tractarians had spent its force, the older tradition reasserted itself in the school of *Lux Mundi*. There can be no greater service to the Church of England to-day than the bringing together of liberal evangelicals and liberal catholics upon a common meeting-ground, and no more important function for this Union than to provide such a rendez-vous.

But ecclesiastical traditions, like those of civic and national societies, can be cherished and cultivated only by individuals; and without a learned, independent and alert clergy, the ideal of comprehensiveness and latitude must needs perish. The poet's eye (even perhaps upon occasion that of the historian) in fine frenzy rolling, may glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven and his imagination body forth the forms of things unknown; but until these are turned to shapes and airy nothing given a local habitation and a name, they remain without effect. So an imperative need of the Church of England to-day is a clergy able to enter into its historic traditions and to transmit them carefully to posterity. In some past centuries social and economic factors contributed to give the clergy a position of independence; but these factors no longer prevail in an egalitarian society, and it is to the education of the clergy therefore that we must now look for the

preservation of this spirit of self-determination. If it may justly be claimed that a powerful present tendency is operative in the Church to require too frequent reference on the part of the parish priest to the bishop in matters properly within his own competence to decide, the check on this undesirable development can come only from a clergy of sufficient education to maintain its traditional position and rights. To this end the renaissance of Ripon Hall is a most welcome and promising feature of the contemporary situation. But it will not suffice if the process ends with the theological college. In my judgment no single need is more urgent alike from the standpoint of the maintenance of the Anglican ideal and for the good estate of this Union than the presence of its members in both Convocation and the Church Assembly. In the lower house of Canterbury Convocation their number is exiguous; and I believe the same to be true of York, though of this I have no direct experience. Moreover, in the unusually large number of diocesan bishoprics vacant during the past twelve months, not one clergyman of definitely liberal convictions has been appointed. Unless this Union can strengthen greatly its representation in the deliberative assemblies of the Church, its influence will be seriously curtailed and its voice unheard.

Even more emphatically does this consideration apply to the laity who are members of this Union. For the tradition of the participation of the laity in the formative deliberations and decisions of the Church is about to change its form. During nearly three centuries the ideal of Hooker of an identity of citizenship and churchmanship had sufficient probability to maintain its theoretic sway; and the representation of the laity was discharged by parliament, and therein increasingly, *pari passu* with constitutional evolution, by the House of Commons. With the progressive removal during the nineteenth century of all religious tests, the incongruity of this claim of parliament to represent the laity of the established Church became increasingly evident. Moreover, with the bestowal of specific rights and powers in the preparation of legislative projects for final submission to parliament upon the Church Assembly, which includes a house of laity, by the Enabling Act of 1919, a new organ of representation was recognized by statute. It is outside the province of the historian to assume the mantle of prediction; but if I were to venture rashly into the field of prophecy, I should affirm that the problem of the immediate future of the Church is the devolution of power from the laity in Parliament to the laity in the Church Assembly. If this be a correct prognosis, then it is of the utmost importance for this Union that

its members, whether clerical or lay, but more especially perhaps the latter, should have adequate representation in the Church Assembly. The recent history of the projected revision of the Canon Law has illustrated and emphasized the importance of the part to be played by the laity; and a Commission is sitting at present to consider the means to make this part more effective. In the wider field of oecumenical relations, the same urgency may be easily discerned. For if the Church of England is to make its full and proper contribution to the healing of the divisions of Christendom through the World Council of Churches and other organs of the oecumenical movement, the liberal tradition must find actual representation in the personnel of the Anglican delegations to these respective bodies.

For in truth a great door and effectual is open to us, and there are many adversaries. The menace to the traditional theological comprehensiveness of the Church of England from Roman infallibility and Protestant fundamentalism is acute and pressing; and to this the only valid answer is the training of a learned clergy. The pressure of centralization is a natural consequence of the development of episcopal authority and powers, and to preserve the historic independence of the inferior clergy there is likewise requisite a *clerus Anglicanus* which shall once more be *stupor mundi*. Again, with the evolution of the position of the house of laity in the Church Assembly, there is the imperative necessity for the adequate representation therein of the members of this Union. Finally, there is the challenge to this Union to make itself the natural meeting ground of liberal evangelicals and liberal catholics for the preservation of this vital element in Anglican belief and practice. By these means it may be hoped that the careful endeavours of those of its members who seek to uphold the traditional fulness of the Anglican ideal may be successfully rewarded; and its present and future development be such that it may be truly said that

> The spirit of Laud is pleased in heaven's pure clime,
> And Hooker's voice the spectacle approves.

THE RESTATEMENT OF CHRISTIANITY FOR THE MODERN EDUCATED MAN

By John Wren-Lewis

YOU have been discussing present trends in English religion at this Conference, and in the course of it you have talked about the heresy of fundamentalism and the dangers and weaknesses of Roman Catholic propaganda. Now to both of these schools of thought the idea implicit in the title of my paper, the idea that the Christian message can be or needs to be re-stated in fresh terms, would seem both dangerous and silly: for both fundamentalists and Papists, the Christian message is straightforward, simple, and essentially changeless, so that anyone who talks about restating it is proposing really to pervert it, or water it down. And there are a great many people who belong to neither of these extreme camps who would still feel something of the same suspicion of restatement. Many who would describe themselves as evangelicals or moderate anglo-catholics and who would acknowledge the practical need for some sort of interpretation of the Christian message into language understanded of twentieth-century people would nevertheless feel uneasy lest such reinterpretation go too far, or lose any essential part of the full faith. The first and in some ways the main thing I want to say here is that I believe all such suspicion betrays a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of Christian truth.

This paper of mine may in fact provide a useful conclusion to your Conference by bringing out for conscious examination a principle which has underlain the more practical considerations advanced in many of the other papers. The reason I support the Modernist movement is that I believe it has grasped—often, I sometimes think, without quite realising the fact—something of immense importance concerning the nature of Christianity, which other schools of Christian thought have missed. The need for reinterpretation and restatement of Christian articles of faith in terms of the contemporary outlook is not, in my view, a matter of mere evangelical expediency. It is of the very nature of religious truth that it has to be continually restated and reinterpreted at all times, not only so that it may be understood by the unenlightened folk outside the Church, *but so that Churchpeople themselves can understand it properly.*

Religious truth is not a matter of static statements of guaranteed validity, it is living truth, truth of life. The Word of God to

which the Christian Church bears witness is not the written word of scripture or creed or dogma but the living Word which was made flesh and dwelt among us, and if it is to be heard to-day it is in the context of human life, not of doctrinal formulae. That is not to say that these formulae are unimportant — far from it. They are attempts to crystalize and objectify the truth of Christianity for purposes of communication and continuity from one generation to another, and it would be most unwise to discard any of the great traditional Christian formulae merely because they appear on a superficial examination to be at variance with current ideas. Modernism has sometimes seemed to mean that in the past, and in these terms I think the Catholics and other traditionalists were right to protest against it. But what needs to be recognised is that the formulae are only formulae *and have no meaning whatever in themselves*, any more than mathematical formulae have. They have meaning only when understood in terms of lived experience in the community which inherits the new life Christ brought into the world—and that means, among other things, that since the Christian community is *essentially* a missionary community, the doctrinal formulae of Christianity only become meaningful *in the process of being interpreted to those outside the Church*.

Christian truth, then, is not something which any institution or organisation or tradition can claim to *possess*. It is something which has to be *continually rediscovered* in the course of the attempts of Christians to share with others the gift of new life which they themselves have received from the historic community. In this I believe it is very similar to artistic and even scientific truth. Unless a play, a symphony or a poem is being continually rediscovered by new actors, players, readers and auditors it is just an abstraction, a set of marks on paper; and the same is true even of a painting or a sculpture. Even a scientific assertion is only *known* as true insofar as it is an integral part of a growing body of developing theory subject to ever-renewed experimental confirmation, first in one way, then in another: apart from that, as Mr. Spencer Brown has lately pointed out in his criticisms of the assertions made by para-psychologists, the so-called scientific truth degenerates into an anecdote. And certainly scientific truths, like artistic ones, are always truths by virtue of being *communicated*.

Failure on the part of any individual or institution to recognize this essentially dynamic character of truth leads, in all fields, not merely to an obscuring of truth but to the actual loss of it. People who file away some scientific statement in their minds as an established truth, and proceed thereafter on the assumption that in this

respect at least they know what is what, will almost certainly be found, after a while, to be understanding the statement in question in an entirely false and misleading way. The man who becomes so familiar with a picture he possesses that he takes it for granted that he has made its beauty his own will be found before long to be missing its true significance altogether. And so, I believe, in the religious field, any organisation or institution or tradition which clings to its dogmas in the belief that they are guaranteed statements of truth delivered once for all to the saints will in fact lose the truth of those dogmas completely, in the sense that it will actually *understand them falsely*. In reality, therefore, it is the traditionalist, not the Modernist, who runs the risk of watering-down and perverting the Christian faith. The Modernist may make mistakes and get into difficulties in his attempts to re-state Christian truths, but it is by virtue, and only by virtue, of such a venturing-forth to rediscover the meaning of the great dogmas in terms of contemporary thought and experience that they can ever preserve any meaning. The traditionalist, by seeking to save his faith, is certain to lose it.

This is no mere verbal paradox I am propounding—I wish it were. It is my serious and sober conviction, as I have stated in the little booklet I had the honour to write for the Modern Churchman's Union, that a very large amount of Christian belief and worship to-day is not true Christianity at all, but a perverted mockery of Christianity, masquerading under the same words and actions yet standing in practice for something which is almost the opposite of what Jesus and the Apostles meant. After all, we have Jesus's own warning that this was likely to happen—there will be many who say Lord, Lord, but know him not, and it is likely that these will criticize and even persecute his true followers, under the impression that they are doing God a religious service by disciplining heretics; and we have too Jesus's own test for distinguishing true disciples from false—'By their fruits ye shall know them'. Are the 'fruits' of those who are concerned to-day with the fanatical defence of the 'true Bible religion' or the 'full Catholic faith' the true fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering and the like? Are they not rather intolerance, pessimism, strife, exclusiveness and qualities of that sort? And looking at the state of the Christian Church generally, can we doubt that there is something very radically wrong with it, when we see both evangelical and Catholic types of Christianity acquiescing in social injustice on a terrible scale and producing in individuals the neuroses that send them so often to the psychiatrist's consulting room?

So I believe that the Modernist way of continual reinterpretation of the Faith, seeking not to preserve it but to find it again in the insights of the modern world, is not only more realistic but actually more Christian in the specific sense of the word. It is literally more faith-ful, in the sense that it really believes that the Christian truth is there to be discovered, and does not treat that truth as something that needs to be defended against disillusionment. (Does not disillusionment imply that the faith one held was really an illusion? This is just what the Modernist does not believe, but the defensive attitude of many traditionalist divines would seem to imply that underneath their protestations of certainty they really fear that they may be deluded.) It is in this faith that I approach the problem of re-stating Christianity for the modern educated man.

The adjective 'educated' here may well be a cause for further suspicion and criticism on the part of those who dislike the notion of restatement. The jibe of Catholics and fundamentalists alike against modernism has always been that it attempts to pander to the fads of intellectuals, whereas the true faith must be simple and unchanging because it is meant also — perhaps most particularly—for the common man. There might seem at first sight to be force in this accusation, but in fact it is based on an oversimplification of the issues. The thought-forms of an age affect everybody living in it, not just those who have the education to discuss them verbally. The simple, unchanging gospel is an illusion. What the common man to-day understands by words like 'God', 'sin', 'saviour' and 'heaven' are completely different from what the common men of the first century A.D. understood by them, because the common man of to-day shares, whether he knows it or not, a world-picture based on the ideas of modern scientifically educated men, and this picture bears no resemblance whatever to the world-picture of first-century man. So although there is no doubt that the gospel must be capable in any age of presentation in terms which simple people can recognize, and although we should do well to suspect a religious philosophy which is incapable of such presentation—there are many such 'philosophies for the enlightened' going about nowadays, just as there were gnostic philosophies in the early days of Christianity—the fact remains that it is only by seeking to re-state Christianity for the *educated* man *that we can ourselves discover what the gospel is.* For we, too, are moulded by the thought-forms of our day, however much those of us in the Church may seek to conform our thoughts to the forms of some preferred period in history. The modern Thomist is probably the last person to know what

St. Thomas was getting at, and the modern back-to-the-Bible evangelist is probably miles away from the mind of St. Paul. We are all moulded by the contemporary world-view : our only choice is between knowing it, and seeking to take that world-view seriously as the basis for our expression of Christianity, or refusing to recognize it, and taking refuge in a pattern of thought-forms which we play with in a purely fantastic way without really understanding them at all.

I am not for one moment assuming, in saying all this, that there is nothing wrong with the contemporary world-view. On the contrary, one of the most valuable things about the sort of restatement of Christianity I have in mind—what might be called *restatement by rediscovery*—is that it helps to show us flaws in the outlook of the modern educated man. For the adventure of rediscovery is not, and cannot be, a merely intellectual enterprise. To think of it in that way would be to go back on everything I have been saying about the nature of Christian truth, and that is the real root error of the type of ' modernism ' which I mentioned earlier, which sees its task simply in terms of examining the traditional doctrines as intellectual propositions and discarding those which do not appear to square with modern ideas. The truth of Christianity is the truth of a new life, and the task of rediscovering the meanings of the great dogmas starts from the experience of that new life as a *fact*, a *datum*. This experience in turn, although it is essentially of something new, a new creation, is nevertheless continuous in certain important ways with the common life which all men share, and to that degree the reinterpretation of dogmas is carried out in terms of lived experience which belongs to the realm of fact for all men. Hence we start from facts, not from ideas : facts which are known to all of us in terms of the contemporary world-view, but which may nevertheless provide the basis for criticism of that world-view, sometimes very radical criticism indeed.

If the modern world view squared with all the facts of experience—even of common experience, discounting the special experience which may be given to particular groups like the Christian Church—it would be in principle complete : and there are few even of the most optimistic of moderns who would claim *that!* The trouble is, of course, that our world-view automatically determines to a large extent the facts of experience to which we are accustomed to pay attention, and we only start to criticize that world-view when something forces us to pay attention to facts of experience which are usually ignored. That, I believe, is just what membership of the Christian Church does for us and enables

us to do for others. To some extent it does this to-day simply by giving as an historical perspective, an awareness, derived from the Church's continuing tradition, of world-views radically different from our own, held by men in other ages : this possibility of criticism of the contemporary outlook is, of course, open in principle to anyone with a knowledge of history, but there is nothing like membership of a living tradition for bringing historical perspective home to us—the ordinary student of history, even of Biblical history, is constantly subject to the danger of reading back modern ways of thought into the historical record. But far more important than this, membership of the Church involves us in an actual tradition of *life* in which things ignored by the modern world are recognized as central—and in this, of course, it provides us with a basis for criticism of the contemporary outlook that is in important ways the same as the criticism which religious traditions have directed against the secular world-view in every age.

The Catholic and anglo-catholic thinkers who talk of making a Christian critique of modern social and scientific ideas—who make bold to suggest that it is possible for Christianity to give sociologists, psychologists and perhaps even physicists new insights into their own subjects, by providing more adequate presuppositions for their investigations—are not wholly wrong, therefore, and perhaps even the conservative evangelicals who set out to expose the errors of our scientific age on the basis of Biblical revealed truth are not wholly wrong : both are asserting a principle which is valid enough in its way, just as they are when they maintain the necessity of preserving the full Catholic faith or the whole Bible-truth. But their rightness is only that of doing the right thing for the wrong reason, and let us remember Mr. Eliot's warning that this can be the greatest treason. For in truth the Christian critique of contemporary ideas cannot be made *a priori* on the basis of other *ideas*, preconceived as guaranteed in themselves by divine revelation. It can only be made as a result of an intellectual adventure in which the divinely revealed truth is itself rediscovered at the same time. Out of an effort to understand the significance of a revelation of *life* which has been given to us in our membership of the Church (or for that matter of any great religious tradition up to a point) there grow simultaneously an understanding both of the limitations of the contemporary world-view and also of the meaning of the great religious dogmas in terms of that world-view. The process is dialectical in its very essence.

I can best illustrate this by proceding now to outline some of

my own conclusions about how Christianity needs to be restated for the modern educated man.

It is my belief that the great fact of experience to which all religion calls attention—the fact to which my own attention has been called by membership of the Christian Church—is the distinctiveness and primacy of face-to-face personal relationships. Now this is itself a statement in modern terms, a statement which I have been helped in making by a number of modern writers, notably John MacMurray, Martin Buber, Erik Gutkind, Nicholas Berdyaev and Paul Tillich. Although there are plenty of statements in Jewish and Christian literature which point towards it, there are very few statements in the Bible or the great Christian classics that are anything like it, and in other religions like Buddhism or Hinduism, or in primitive religions, there are some statements which would seem to be directly at variance with it, and many others which seem to have nothing to do with it at all. The point is that people in other cultures just did not think about life, the world and human affairs in the same way as we do to-day.

The expression 'distinctiveness and primacy of face-to-face personal relationships', for example, implies a background of individualist thought about personality which was quite alien to most ancient cultures. In those cultures it was taken for granted that men were all bound up together in a vast co-operative network of psycho-social forces in which the individual had no existence in his own right at all, but simply lived to perform his appropriate function in the total organic life of the tribe or society. In this context men became aware, often with alarming suddeness, that certain of their relationships with one another were of a radically different character: they found themselves involved in a mysterious facing-one-another which cut them off from the great organic life of the tribe by making them count for themselves. The natural language for describing this experience for them did not involve terms like 'personal relationship' so much as terms like 'otherness', 'transcendent power', and probably even 'separation'. They naturally sought ways and means of holding on to the terrible yet wonderful new existence, and these tended as often as not to involve enforced solitariness, as a safeguard against being sucked back into the *participation mystique*, or a systematic deprecation of all ordinary domestic relationships as obstacles to the realisation of Absolute Reality. Thus we get the characteristic language of asceticism, separatist mysticism, the *via negativa*, the Buddhist search for Nirvana, the Hindu's renunciation of 'human ties' in the second half of life—yet what all these describe is, I believe, an essentially positive experience,

the same experience to which the Jewish Rabbis alluded when they said that the *schechinah* lay between husband and wife in marriage, or St. Paul when he said 'Without love I am nothing', or St. John when he wrote 'He that abideth in love abideth in God, and God in him'.

Again, in most cultures other than our own men felt themselves to be much more involved with the universal order of nature than we do to-day. Like the infant as conceived by psychoanalysis, or the neo-tribal society depicted by George Orwell in *1984*, men felt themselves capable of affecting events on a cosmic scale. ('Those stars are only a few feet up, and we could reach up to them if the Party willed, but no-one does, because the Party does not will it, and apart from the Party individuals can do nothing.') Hence the profound experience I have been describing tended to evoke cosmic, metaphysical descriptions rather than the clinical or sociological descriptions we ordinarily use to-day. The 'transcedent power' or 'divine glory' which constituted this new mode of life was felt to be not just super-tribal but super-natural, for the organic unity of tribal life was generally seen as all one with the organic unity of nature. The experience which we to-day should describe in terms of a new type of relationship with another person was described then rather in terms of joint relationship with a Creator who could clearly unmake the natural order and re-create it at will. The practical problem of securing the continuance of the new state of being was spoken of in terms of redemption from (or, more optimistically, redemption *of*) an order of nature which had fallen away from the Absolute Creator, an order in which man was 'under bondage' to the 'powers of this world'.

Now I am most emphatically not saying that religious assertions about the Creation, the Fall, or the 'flight of the Alone to Alone', are *nothing but* mythological elaborations of a simple affair of human psychology. On the contrary, this is an example—probably the central example—of the dialectical principle I was speaking of, by which the attempt to understand a fact of religious experience in modern terms reveals inadequacies in the modern world-view. I do believe that in the end of the day the phenomenon I am referring to requires cosmic language for its proper expression, and I also believe that we are failing to understand it properly unless we see that all the propositions of 'negative' religion can, at least in principle, be applied to it. (It is for this latter reason that I deprecate the tendency of many modern Christian apologists to argue that there is no real unity between different religions, and to ascribe the

positive attitude of Christianity to the ordinary relationships of life as part of the uniqueness of this faith. I am a firm believer in the uniqueness of Christianity, but we do the Christian cause no good by claiming uniqueness on false grounds—and I am convinced, with Professor Buber, that these *are* false grounds. Moreover the effect of separating Christianity off from the oriental religions in this way is, I believe, to impoverish our understanding of Christianity. It makes it possible to believe, for example, that Christianity gives its blessing to the relationships of family or society *in their present form*, instead of demanding their radical and revolutionary transformation; and it makes it possible to believe that the love of which Christian teaching speaks is either sentimental feeling or, what is really just as bad, a completely emotionless will towards social harmony. None of these errors is possible if we ourselves recognise that the love which Christianity wishes man to achieve within the ordinary domestic relationships of life is *at the same time* that utterly transcendent 'otherness' and 'separateness' of which oriental religions speak.) I repeat, the last thing I want to do is to *reduce* the great religious assertions to anything less than themselves. What I am saying is that *the nearest we can come to expressing those assertions in modern terms* is to say that they have to do with the distinctiveness and primacy of face-to-face personal relationship. And there is a good illustration here of the danger of the traditionalist approach which assumes that we can take the terms of traditional religion just as they stand. What happens in this case, as I have written elsewhere, is that the religious language about 'God' and 'creation' and 'transcendence' is taken in a sense which, behind all the metaphysical trappings which are attached to it, really boils down to belief in an old man above the sky, who moves the world about like a great puppet-master and lays down arbitrary rules of conduct like a great schoolmaster—the fantasy which Freud calls a 'projected father-image', and which that great Christian William Blake called 'Nobodaddy'. This is not merely a crude and childish way of representing religious truth—*it is a different sort of thing altogether*, and has simply no relationship to what religion is really about. My statement about face-to-face personal relationship, on the other hand, for all its inadequacy, does at least indicate the right universe of discourse, and open up the possibility of a genuine growth of understanding.

For once we begin to take seriously the fact that face-to-face personal relationships (in which people give each other significance for what they are in themselves, and not just for the function they perform in the family or tribe or political party or polite

social gathering) really are distinctive and primary, then all sorts of things begin to appear in a different light. To begin with, there are a whole host of modern insights and scientific discoveries which, once our attention is drawn to the fact, may be seen to suggest, often quite strongly, that the older ways of describing the phenomena of personal relationship were more adequate than ours. For example, we use in common speech expressions like 'falling *in* love', 'love will find a way', or—perhaps humorously—'this thing is bigger than both of us', which strongly suggest that the face-to-face personal relationship does involve a genuine encounter with a reality transcending the human individuals concerned, a reality which is, moreover, not merely an abstraction, or a simple collective order like a society, but something active, with a will and purpose of its own, which is at once both particular and universal, the same for all persons. This suggestion is powerfully reinforced by modern existentialist insights into the essential relationship between truly individual existence and 'togetherness' and 'communication', a relationship sharply contrasted with the mere oneness of the isolated individual and its counterpart of social collectivity or herd-existence. Many discoveries of modern psychology about the dependence of personality upon early personal relationships also point in the same direction, and suggest moreover that the reality which is encountered ' between man and man ' is indeed the creator of personality. If we take Freud at all seriously we are almost invited to use the traditional religious terminology, when we find him speaking of the fundamental love-energy which provides the motive-power for all personal individuality as 'eternal eros'. Then in the field of the biological sciences we find growing evidence that the organic unity of social life is indeed closely bound up with the larger organic unity of nature. This is almost always taken to be evidence against any sort of religious outlook nowadays, of course, but there is evidence from other fields of biology suggesting strongly that at least in the restricted field of the human body the ancient view that psychological and social events can cause physical biological changes, as well as being caused by them, is correct; and if so, does not the fact of the unity of organic nature imply that the older view that there is a two-way causal relationship between human life and the whole natural order may be correct after all, rather than our own materialistic view that the causal process always works from nature to human life but never in the other direction? The reason we are so sceptical of this possibility is that our age has a rooted prejudice in favour of physical determination, but if finally we turn to the physical sciences we find

that the whole basis for such a determinist view is being destroyed by the advance of physics itself. More important still, physicists are being driven by their own discoveries into a recognition that the whole notion of matter as the ultimately real *stuff* of which everything else is composed, and of space and time as the ultimately real framework in which all else is set, is false: space, time and the so-called basic material entities are *abstractions* resulting from the analysis of *concrete human experience*, and there is growing evidence that we are imposing our own categories upon that experience rather than really recognising its true character when we assume that it is essentially material or spatio-temporal. The most modern developments in relativity theory, linked with the new discipline known as communication theory, suggest that we get the best results in physics itself by assuming that the universe is *not* ultimately a physical continuum but *a network of persons in communication*, with space, time and matter as the mode of their communication at a certain level. So that there are emerging out of modern physics suggestions of the possiblity that if 'eternal eros' is the creator of person-in-relationship, we might well be able to describe Him as the ultimate ground of universal being, the creator of the universe.

Having thus rediscovered the meaning of the basic religious conceptions in terms of these modern insights, however, we can and must then reverse the process and use the religious world-view as a means of correcting the false assumptions in modern thought, and this too I believe to be a most fruitful process. For example, on the basis of the assumption that personality is not something organic which the individual possesses, as it were, in his own right, but is rather continuously created by an infinite Being 'between man and man', we may reinterpret many of the discoveries of modern 'depth psychology' in a way which unifies apparently diverse views like Freud's and Jung's, clarifies many hazy concepts like 'the unconscious' and 'individuation', and opens up new and hitherto unrecognized possibilities for further investigation. This happens to be a subject of which I have made a special study,[1] but I believe there are similar possibilities in other fields of science also, even in physics. Again, the theological view of face-to-face personal relationships, and the radical distinction to be drawn between them and social relationships, opens up the possibility of an entirely new approach to ethics, which is being practically forced upon us now by the psychologists' dis-

[1] c.f. my article in *The Hibbert Journal* for April, 1952, entitled 'Religion and Mental Health'.

covery of repression.[2] Finally, I believe it is possible to obtain new and vitally important insights into all sorts of problems of social and political organization on the basis of this view of the human situation.

I have no time left to go into any further details about the possibility of re-stating Christianity for the modern educated man which are opened up from this starting-point, except in the barest outline. I believe it is possible to show that the great Christian doctrines about the nature of God are not abstract metaphysical formulae but highly important practical truths about the character of that distinctive relationship without which we are nothing : I have written about this at greater length in my article 'Modern Philosophy and the Doctrine of the Trinity' in *The Philosophical Quarterly* for July, 1955. I believe the doctrines of of the Incarnation and Atonement can be seen to tell us something about how Jesus, by being completely indwelt by Personal Relationship, instead of allowing the pressures of social organisation or mere egoism to cut him off from the Divine Power as we continually do, was able to found a new type of society upon earth in which the long hoped-for redemption of the merely organic world has come about; and I believe the doctrine of the Resurrection can be seen to declare the hope that in this new society a radical alteration in the relationship between personality and matter becomes possible. Finally, I believe the practical problems of the Christian life, of prayer and sacrament, can be seen afresh in this light. I have dealt with these beliefs in somwhat greater detail in the pamphlet I wrote for the Union, called *Return to the Roots*, and I have tried to expand those considerations which bear upon the Atonement and Resurrection in a series of four articles in the *Church of England Newspaper* last Advent, with the general title 'Rediscoverying the True Faith'. I hope this paper may have helped to clarify some of the difficulties which members of the Union have raised about those writings of mine in discussion and correspondence, but obviously to deal with the problem adequately will require many books. I am, of course, writing one myself, but I hope out of this Conference there will come many others, for in the hands of Modernism, I am convinced, the future of Christianity in England lies.

[2]c.f. my article in *The Hibbert Journal* for July 1956, entitled 'The Continuous Fall'.

CONFERENCE SERMON*

By the Rev. R. S. Dawson, M.A.
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'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' (*II Corinthians* iii.17.)

THE subject of this present conference of Modern Churchmen which it is my privilege to address is 'Present Trends in English Religion'. In so far as I understand these trends they appear to be tainted with a spirit which, to me, is the opposite of the one that we who have come here represent. The present trend is directed towards, not a religion of reasonable freedom and liberty, but a religion of authority, and where that exists it is bound to be one of restriction and constriction in which men of liberal and reasoned beliefs find it difficult to live and breathe.

This religion of authority is showing itself chiefly in three directions, in a narrow interpretation of the Bible, in a limited view of the Church, and specifically in the revision of the Canons. It is unnecessary for me to take up time in considering these in detail for they will find their place in the papers which you are to hear, but they must all be regarded as a common symptom of the times in which we live—times which for obvious reasons are dangerous, disturbed and unstable. At such periods it is natural for men to seek some ground on which they can stand and which offers to them a security they cannot find in the world around them. They are therefore already conditioned to look favourably on forms of religion which seem to give clear answers in their own field and answers backed by what is supposed to be an acceptable authority. For the Protestant this authority is assumed to be the Bible and so it is not surprising to find the Scriptures exalted and stressed along fundamentalist lines as in the campaigns of Billy Graham and others.

Recent correspondence in *The Times* has turned on this issue, on the answer which a deacon in the Church of England has to make at his ordination whereby he declares his unfeigned belief in all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, a question which in the light of modern Biblical scholarship can by many neither be sincerely asked nor truthfully answered. That correspondence (June 30 *et seq.*) was disappointing to me in one particular, that it failed to produce evidence from ordination

*Preached at the Thirty-ninth Annual Conference of Modern Churchmen at Girton College, Cambridge, on Monday, July 23rd, 1956.

candidates that they are in fact troubled in conscience at having to make this reply. Thirty years ago I believe that there would have been some who would have accepted a challenge to declare their faith that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty—not so apparently to-day. It is a sign of the times. It is proverbial for one who feels himself in danger to be ready to grasp at anything which shows the least chance of helping him out of his trouble. That is what we are witnessing now, men and women turning in pathetic desperation to the idea of an infallible Bible or (in practice, if not in theory) an infallible Church. The search is on for an authority which will absolve the seeker from the inner necessity of following the truth no matter where that truth may lead. So long as the world situation remains potentially dangerous and fluctuating we may expect to find trends in religion to be mainly authoritarian. If aware of the psychological reason for this we shall not be unduly depressed, recalling for our encouragement the aphorism of the great Cambridge Platonist, Benjamin Whichcote, that 'the longest sword, the strongest lungs, the most voices, are false measures of truth'.

But though the present trends of English religion appear to be as I have suggested yet that does not mean that there are not other, and more hopeful, factors at work. A short time ago I watched a television discussion on the subject of religion between a Catholic priest and a group of journalists. As the talk proceeded it was obvious that his whole method of approach was not one which would commend itself to them. They were speaking from a different background and there was little in common between them and him; but, and here is the tragedy, if they had been in discussion with a liberal churchman the situation would have been quite different and there would have been a real chance of progress. The background of men and women of to-day makes it most desirable that the questions they ask should be answered by those who speak from the faith that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The unhappy truth is that with so many in this age their minds pull them one way and their fears another. They have insufficient faith in their minds to trust to them for guidance and so they listen instead to their fears which tempt them to clutch at the straw of an authoritarian religion. It is the duty of liberal churchmen, a duty which this conference exists to fulfil, to state as clearly as, by the grace of God we can, that we must trust in the promise of the guidance and inspiration of the Spirit and, again to quote from Whichcote, that 'a man has as much right to use his own understanding, in judging of truth, as he has a right to use his own eyes to see his way'.

The present situation is not one which can be regarded as satisfactory; they are dark days for those who entertain the outlook that we in this conference represent. The danger is the same as in the long story of religion it has always been, that of worshipping false gods, for when any dogma is asserted, either by authority or by implication, the conclusion is inescapable that in fact 'these are thy gods, O Israel'. We are judged by what we believe. It is evident, for example, that a god who creates or allows a place of torment to exist to punish those who have not joined the right church in this world and have not found the right answers, is a false god and not one whom we can worship. It is easy to smile at this and to speak of out-dated ideas long since abandoned, but that particular idea is not dead and so long as the Athanasian creed is appointed 'to be said or sung' at public worship it will not be. Yet that is but one example of what I have in mind. What kind of picture of God is affirmed if we are called upon to believe that He has appointed for the sole channel of His grace in the world either an infallible book (or books) or an authoritarian church? Is our conception of God really as small as this? Are we really prepared to exclude from the normal channels of His grace all but a tiny proportion of the human race or of the world's long history, all the teeming millions who could never have known and cannot yet know of these restricted and parochial dogmas? Can such a conception of God be described in any sense as worthy?

If liberal churchmen are to be firm in refusing the errors of an authoritarian view of the Bible and of the Church they must be able to present a reasoned faith to take their place so that when eventually men turn, as one day they will, to seek to know what liberal Christianity offers the answer is ready. Our temptation has always been to be more negative than positive, to say what we cannot believe rather than what we do. That temptation must be resisted. I think that the great, perhaps the greatest, contribution which we can make is to emphasize and to go on emphasizing the wholeness of life and the essential unity of human experience. The need to do this exists because of man's almost incredible capacity to divide himself into water-tight compartments, to hold ideas which are mutually incompatible—and especially in the sphere of religion. This logical weakness saps the lifeblood from any faith which claims that man is made in the image and likeness of God and is to be challenged whenever and wherever it appears. Consider (as in two sessions to-morrow we shall be invited to do under the guidance of two experts) the field of scholarship and the Bible. I am not concerned here with the results of that scholarship but rather with the approach. For many years now the student has

been able to examine the books of the Bible with no preconceived ideas of inspiration to check his work but simply with the determination to use his mind and knowledge in order to find out the truth. That approach, as everyone knows, has yielded and continues to yield most important and illuminating results, but the leaders in our Church of England, aware of this and fully admitting it, yet demand from deacons at their ordination an answer which represents a view of the Bible which neither the Bishops nor the majority of the deacons themselves hold. This is inconsistency carried to lengths which appear to many laymen as a deplorable play with the plain meaning of words. We cannot afford to have that charge levied against us any longer.

That is only one inconsistency—there are many others. The Prayer Book we use is inconsistent. However long it may take liberal churchmen cannot rest until the Prayer Book is revised, and revised with one major consideration over all others, that the conception of God revealed in our public worship is Christian and is worthy. The Occasional Offices of Baptism, Marriage and Burial cry out for such revision. No one who believes in a God of love can surely be content with a burial service which does not even allow a place for the 23rd Psalm and from which the Christian hope is so painfully lacking. The Occasional Offices are opportunities when the Church is brought into contact with people whom it never reaches at any other time, and yet these opportunities are thrown away—largely because the services we are ordered to use are inconsistent with the Gospel which we believe and preach. It is no good blaming Parliament for rejecting the 1928 Prayer Book; that was twenty-eight years ago and everyone knows that it was the alterations in the Holy Communion service to which Parliament objected, and some think rightly objected. How long are we to acquiesce in being placed in the position of either having to take part (as laymen or as clergy) in services which are intolerably inconsistent with the present day outlook in religious belief, or if we do not, of being accused of lawlessness and indiscipline? It cannot be too clearly stated that the principles behind all revision must be not those of the niceties of liturgical scholarship but of truth.

Inconsistencies as grave as these are a danger to the good name of the Church of England. Even when improvements in some directions are attempted the opportunities are missed, as I fear is the case with the new revised lectionary shortly to come into use. To choose as the first lesson on Easter Day the account of the institution of the Passover from the Book of Exodus and another lesson from the same book at Evening Prayer is a confession of failure which cannot be justified on simply liturgical grounds. Is

this really the best selection that can be made on Easter Day? Examples could be multiplied were the time available. This is a vital and practical contribution that the Modern Churchmen's Union could make, for I do not know of any lectionary which has been drawn up by liberal churchmen for Sunday use. It is an obvious place in our services where liberty should be claimed, for can anyone seriously contend, with all the various lectionaries which have been tried, that it is important to maintain uniformity in this matter? It is a vain and hopeless endeavour to attempt to give a comprehensive selection from the whole Bible in the Sunday lessons, but what can be done and has not been seriously attempted is to select readings which are appropriate to the occasion and which have a meaning and a message which a modern congregation can appreciate. Is there anything wrong in that? It is most desirable that it should be done as it is also desirable that a selection of Psalms should be made and arranged to be sung on Sundays. I yield to none in regarding the singing of short and carefully chosen psalms as the backbone of Morning and Evening Prayer, but the nettle of their choice should be firmly grasped. A kind of liturgical paralysis seems to have gripped the Church of England so that she cannot do the comparatively simple things which cry out to be done—if the will to do them were there.

We often hear it said that the Church is out of step with the people because she has lagged behind in social leadership and in matters of social conscience and it is possible that this is so. But to my mind a more serious charge still is that the Church is out of step with the best thought and the best minds. That does not mean that individual churchmen cannot be found (from all denominations) who can make notable and brilliant contributions but they are not assimilated by the general body and the Church gives the impression that if pressed she would be unable and unwilling to find the grace or the courage to stand at their side and to give them the backing they have a right to receive. So the Church displays a timidity and a lack of faith which will bring, and has already brought, its own nemesis. What does the Church fear? She fears, so it seems, for herself. She fears that her own life may be disorganised, even disrupted, if she allows too much liberty. She is afraid that the lines of demarcation between herself and other denominations may become indistinct and blurred. But if the Church remains fearful and self-regarding she displays a lack of faith in God and in effect denies that she believes in the promise of the Spirit to be guided into all truth. It is greatly to be deplored if the Church gives the impression that she is afraid to welcome

and to seek for the truth in case her own position should be undermined. But that is the idea that many have formed when they have observed the rift between scholarship and worship in the life and witness of the Church—and a rift which seems to widen so that it must be regarded as 'a present trend in English religion'. This tension cannot but be dangerous and yet there is little sign that authority is aware of it. A certain time lag is to be expected before worship takes its place alongside scholarship but when no effort can be detected at all to bring this about then patience is apt to be replaced by impatience and eventually by hostility. That danger is not far off.

The root of the whole matter is man's conception of God—our conception of God. That concept must be as true as we have the power to understand and to appreciate the truth. We believe that all truth is revealed by God—not some truth but all truth, and therefore we regard all truth, not some truth, as sacred. But who is to be the judge of truth? Is it to be the Bible? or the Church? Is it to be the voice of some external authority or the voice of the Spirit? In Bernard Shaw's play 'St. Joan', in the trial scene Shaw takes this issue of the final authority and isolates it clearly. Joan has been speaking of her Voices in which she so firmly believed and her accuser asks, 'Then your voices command you not to submit yourself to the Church Militant?' Joan replies, 'My voices do not tell me to disobey the Church; but God must be served first'. Her accuser fastens on this as a hawk on its prey, 'And you, and not the Church, are to be the judge?' Joan: 'What other judgement can I judge but my own?' The same problem confronts all Christians still; how shall we judge between the various authorities? The answer is, I believe, by following the best and the highest that we know; what other judgement can we judge but our own?

In the first instance and in the last we are drawn to the Christ because for us He is the best and the highest that we know. 'Lord', said St. Peter, 'to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life'. This is still how it happens. If we do not feel that for us He has the words of eternal life then we cannot follow and indeed it would be wrong to do so. Some may say that we make God in our own image—so in a sense we do for we cannot know what is good unless we can see it in our hearts and say Amen to it there. But if we may be said to make God in our own likeness it is far truer to affirm that God makes us in His. From where does our consciousness of good come from but from Him? From what source does our devotion to the truth devolve but from Him? If we know anything at all of His grace and power it is because He has willed it. God draws the soul of man to Himself as a magnet draws the steel. It

was that belief which the Cambridge Platonists stressed in the seventeenth century when they preached so often from their favourite text, 'The spirit of man is the Candle of the Lord'. It is in this same faith that we are bold to echo the word of St. Paul that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is, and must be, liberty.

NOTE.—All works on the Cambridge Platonists are unfortunately out of print with the exception of Dr. de Pauley's *The Candle of the Lord* (S.P.C.K., 7/6).

BOOK REVIEWS

THE RESURRECTION OF PROFESSOR BETHUNE-BAKER

A most important contribution to the constructive presentation of Modern Anglican Theology has been accomplished by a well-known American theologian, Dr. Norman Pittenger, Professor in the General Theological Seminary of New York.

It is the editing and publication of the theological writings of Professor Bethune-Baker. But who was Professor Bethune-Baker?

> 'Born in 1861, he died in 1951. For many years he held the anciently endowed Lady Margaret Chair of Divinity in the University of Cambridge. He was for half a century the most learned historian of doctrine in England. His theological position has been described as 'a reverent, Anglican catholicly minded modernism'. Deeply read in the ancient writers of the Church, he was yet alert to the new movement of thought, in science, literature, and philosophy. His convincing presentation of the Christian faith is the best proof of this.'

In Cambridge Bethune-Baker was pre-eminent in his knowledge of patristic theology and Professor Pittenger compares him in this respect with the eminence of Hastings Rashdall in Oxford.

But why has Professor Pittenger undertaken his difficult and delicate task of producing a collected, compressed, revised edition of Bethune-Baker's dogmatic apologetic? This is best explained by the American scholar himself. He observed with pain rather than with surprise that in a recent historical survey of theological scholarship in Cambridge no reference is made to Bethune-Baker. He accounts for this omission by the difficulty which would have faced the writer of the Cambridge survey had he introduced Bethune-Baker into his essay without criticism of Bethune-Baker's views. Professor Pittenger opines that the Cambridge essayist avoided doing so lest he should suffer humiliation at the hands of Bethune-Baker's adherents similar to that which Bishop Gore experienced when he denied specifically the orthodoxy of Rashdall's theological teaching based, unknown to Gore, on the scholastic affirmations of Thomas Aquinas.

> 'I have read and studied the entire *corpus* of Bethune-Baker's literary remains with the exception of a few reviews and essays which are not available in this country and which I have not been able to find in Britain. With this as a background, I am prepared to say that the 'silent treatment' accorded Bethune-Baker in most theological circles is both short-sighted and self-defeating. He was a great scholar, a holy man, a kindly friend and never-failing helper to his students at Cambridge. . . . Above all he was a man of deep faith who believed that Christianity needed but a fair, compelling, and intelligible presentation to commend itself to the anxious, faith-seeking world of his day.'

This he strove consistently to achieve. He was a Modernist in that

> 'he felt that the emphasis on, or acquiescence in, ideas of unnatural wonder, catastrophic intrusion, *contra*-natural ideas of the *super*-natural, and the like, not only made the Christian religion seem outlandish and incredible but also failed to do justice to the Judaeo-Christian conception of the divine consistency which has its secular counterpart in the scientific understanding of the world as a pattern or movement which develops epigenetically.'
>
> 'He emphasized that Christianity is a living and growing tradition, that it is (as he said) a chief concern of the genuine Christian modernist to work for "natural change and development" within the established Christian community. As an Anglican, he found that the Church of England and its sister-communions provide a peculiar opportunity for exactly this movement of thought and this growth in understanding, for it is there that 'a new presentation of Christianity' can be made which will not "sweep away all ancient landmarks and institutions". If the historic Christian tradition is to be saved, "we must remember that we can only save by serving".'

It is such an act of service, precious indeed, that Professor Pittenger has achieved. The three volumes of his invaluable series compiled by Professor Pittenger are):

1. *The Faith of the Apostles' Creed* (1955).
2. *Early Traditions about Jesus* (1956).
3. *The New View of Christianity* (1956).

Numbers (1) and (2) are published by the Seabury Press, Greenwich, Connecticut. Number (3) is published by Generol Seminary Book Store, New York.

Need we add that these three volumes should be prescribed for study in all our Anglican Theological Colleges?

Last but not least. In a volume just published entitled *To-Morrow's Faith To-Day*—'Essays on re-thinking the Christian Message. Towards a new Modernism'[1]—Professor Pittenger in a number of arresting essays—undertakes to answer the urgent question :

> Has the rejection of Modernism by our ecclesiastical reactionaries helped to create the present crisis in the religious world of to-day?

H.D.A.M.

[1] Published by the Exposition Press, New York, 1956. (Two and a half dollars.)

SEER, SAGE, SATIRIST. SYDNEY SMITH (1771–1845)

Nowell Smith, a retired Oxford don, former Headmaster of Sherborne School, has employed his leisure to good purpose by redirecting the attention of British readers to Sydney Smith: Seer, Sage, and Satirist. The final stage of his undertaking is accomplished in his little volume[1] published in the World's Classics, consisting of 548 letters selected by its Editor from his great two-volume edition of *The Letters of Sydney Smith* published by the Clarendon Press in 1953. This latest volume, like its predecessor owes much to the numerous illuminating, mainly biographical, foot-notes and appendices contributed by the Editor.

[1] *Selected Letters of Sydney Smith*, edited by Nowell C. Smith (The World's Classics, published by Oxford University Press, Amen House, London, E.C.4. 1956; 6/-).

Sydney Smith, who according to Lord Macaulay's verdict is 'the greatest master of ridicule that has appeared among us since Swift', was born in 1771. Educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford, he was ordained in 1794, and entered on his sacred calling as a country curate on Salisbury Plain in the parish of Netheravon, whose squire was Michael Hicks Beach, M.P. In 1798 Sydney Smith migrated to Edinburgh, accompanied by his squire's elder son to whom he had become tutor; the political condition of the Continent, owing to the dominance of Napoleon, prohibited the customary *Grand Tour*.

Edinburgh at this time was a remarkable cultural centre and proved to be an ideal environment for the young Sydney Smith. Here, with others, he founded the *Edinburgh Review* and became its first editor in 1802 and was among its chief contributors for over 20 years. The brilliant group of young men responsible for the initiation of this literary project is thus described by Leslie Stephen:

> 'A knot of clever lads (Smith was 31, Jeffrey 29, Brown 24, and Brougham 23) met in the third (not as Smith afterwards said, the "eighth or ninth") storey of a house in Edinburgh and started the journal by acclamation.'

Enlightenment, Liberalism, Fearlessness—and not least its literary brilliance (Macaulay was one of its contributors)—secured for it an amazing influence in political and philosophical as well as in literary circles in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In 1839 Sydney Smith re-published a collection of 65 articles which he had contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*.

Although he became a great literary and political figure, Sydney Smith was first and foremost a clergyman; a most impressive and attractive preacher of practical and reasonable Christianity. He was also a most devoted, many-sided, philanthropic parish priest but not less was his clerical influence exercised by good humoured wit and cutting ridicule in the highest social circles where his presence was always welcome. Strange as it may seem ecclesiastical preferment did not come his way. He held in succession two country parishes —one in Yorkshire and one in Somersetshire and in his sixtieth year was made a Canon of St. Paul's.

It is not hard when one reads this collection of his letters to discover why Sydney Smith was not promoted—although the reasons for it are not creditable to the government of the Church of England.

He publicly sympathised with causes which were regarded in traditional church circles as disloyal to the Church of England and even hostile to the Christian Religion. First and foremost he did not regard the contemporary Bishops as a body as either infallible or trustworthy and he did not hesitate to say so publicly and privately. In a letter to Lord Lansdowne (September 14th, 1838) dealing with the Residence and Plurality Bill, he asserts that

> 'The Bill is now a very good Bill. The original Bill was bad, because John Russell, legislating on what it is not likely he could understand, took his information from bishops, who were sure to mislead him because they consulted their own power. In the same way I am sure that his Dean and Chapter Bill may be very materially improved, and that the errors it contains proceed from the same source.' (p. 255 f.).

Writing to Lord John Russell a year earlier he had maintained that

> 'Pretended Heterodoxy is the plea with which those rascally Bishops endeavour to keep off from the Bench every man of spirit and independence, and to terrify you into the appointment of feeble men who will be

sure to desert you (as all your Bishops have lately and shamefully done) in a moment of peril.' (p. 249).

In the great campaign for Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform (1808–1812) led by Canning, Sydney Smith played an indomitable part by the publication of his *Peter Plymley's Letters*. These helped to pave the way for victory which was achieved in 1829 under the Duke of Wellington, two years after Canning's death.

Perhaps we ought to explain that Sydney Smith was no adherent of the rising Oxford Movement which he publicly denounced in St. Paul's.

Another example of Sydney Smith's far-sighted and comprehensive outlook is evidenced by his understanding sympathy extended to the revolutionary teaching on the need for birth control propounded by T. R. Malthus (1766–1834) a poor curate who in 1798 published his first essay on the *Principle of Population*, in which he asserted that population increases in a geometrical ratio but the means of subsistence only in an arithmetical ratio and the appalling consequences that must ensue when birth control is not practised in communities where the food supply is restricted. Of Malthus Sydney Smith wrote:

> 'Poor Malthus! everybody regrets him: in science and in conduct equally a philosopher, one of the most practically wise men I ever met, shamefully mistaken and unjustly calumniated, and receiving no mark of favour from a Liberal Government, who ought to have interested themselves in the fortunes of such a virtuous martyr to truth.' (p. 231).

But it is not for his foresight and courage that Sydney Smith is remembered to-day but for his wit. He characterized a futile policy of conciliation as an attempt to placate the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's by stroking the Dome of the Cathedral.

When it was proposed to remedy the increasing noise of the traffic outside the Cathedral by substituting a wooden pavement, Sydney Smith remarked that the needful work could be supplied by the Dean and Chapter putting their heads together.

To the designations; Seer, Sage, Satirist, we are disposed to think that Saint might be added.

His widow wrote of him:

> 'I do not believe that anyone filling only a subordinate rank in life ever past thro' it more universally beloved, more sought after for his brilliancy and wit, his honourable bearing, his masterly talents, his truth, his honesty!' (p. 105).

UNUSUAL PARTNERS*

By J. K. Nettlefold

Mr. Nettlefold, now Rector of Bourton-on-the-Water, has given us, in this book, a portrait of a remarkable woman, Alexandra Mary Von Bosse, and, at the same time, has written an autobiography.

It is an account of a friendship which began in Dresden in the year 1922 and continued until Mrs. Von Bosse's death in 1952. The chapter which describes the beginning of the friendship in Dresden is interesting, both for the picture which it gives of a remarkable and attractive German woman, and for its evocation of life in Dresden at a time when old ways of life were still being pursued, but were in process of rapid change. Mrs. Von Bosse appears to have

*(Burrow's Press Ltd. 1956; price 10/6). Cheltenham.

adopted Mr. Nettlefold in the capacity of a kind of unofficial aunt and, when he became a Unitarian Minister at Stockley in Manchester, she kept house for him and continued to do so until his marriage.

The life of a Unitarian Minister is evidently not without its difficulties and those experienced by Mr. Nettlefold and his 'aunt' in his first church are well described. A move to Norwich gives Mr. Nettlefold the opportunity of affording us a glimpse of a happier situation with a small but loyal congregation and a dignified church building. Readers who have, perhaps, imagined that Unitarians were, for the most part, intellectuals and independent thinkers will be surprised to learn that this seems to be by no means the case and that tradition plays an important part in Unitarianism. Mr. Nettlefold, as we all know, left Unitarianism for the Church of England, but one gathers that his 'aunt' was never fully reconciled to this movement, though she continued to keep house for him. Mr. Nettlefold deals very shortly with the reasons which induced him to change his ecclesiastical allegiance and we should have been grateful if he had entered more at length into the considerations which weighed with him. Perhaps one of his Unitarian congregation, who said that he had never really been a Unitarian at all, hit upon the truth.

Unusual Partners is an unusual book. It is worth reading because it is written with candour and modesty. It introduces us to two attractive persons and throws some light upon little known by-ways of religious life in England. It is as interesting as many novels and certainly more instructive.

W. R. MATTHEWS

A FRENCH PRESENTATION OF JESUS*

This life of Jesus was published in French under the title *Jesus en son Temps* in 1945. Ten years earlier an English translation of another life of Jesus by another eminent Frenchman had appeared, Guignebert's *Jésus*, and comparison between the two is inevitable. Professor Guignebert himself expressed the attitude in which he approached his task: 'The historian must permit himself to be swayed by no other presupposition save that he may believe nothing and that he knows nothing, he is nothing more than a seeker' (*op. cit.*, p. 411). In striking contrast, M. Daniel-Rops states his attitude in the closing sentence of his Introduction, 'The life of Christ is contained in history and contains it, it is not merely the vindication of some nameless tragic humility, it is the supreme explanation and the final standard by which everything is measured, from which history itself takes meaning and justification.' Where Professor Guignebert starts from a position in which he must believe nothing, M. Daniel-Rops may be said to start by believing everything. But it is open to question whether the total detachment of the scholar, or the novelist's total acceptance, is more likely to lead us to a true understanding of the significance of the life of Jesus.

M. Daniel-Rops is a literary figure of great distinction. He is an Academician, a novelist and dramatist of established reuptation, and brings to his task not only a mastery of the literary art, but also no mean knowledge of the original sources for the life of Jesus. He is also a devout Catholic. Hence the detachment of the scholar is impossible for him. The picture of Jesus which he has given with consummate literary skill, is 'finished down to the leaf and the snail, down to the eyes on the peacock's tail'. In its richness of colour and

* *Jesus in His Time*, by Daniel-Rops. Translated from the French by R. W. Millar. Pp. 492. (Eyre & Spottiswoode. 1955; 30/- net.).

supercharged detail it irresistibly recalls the loving perfection of an illuminated mediaeval missal. Side by side wih a characteristic realism which tells us that the innocents slaughtered by Herod probably were about 25 in number, stands a charming bit of apocryphal fancy which relates how, during the flight to Egypt, the Virgin Mary desired to eat some fruit which was out of reach, whereupon the child Jesus ordered the branch to bend down. To reward the tree for its obedience the Holy Child bid an angel take one of its branches to plant in Paradise, where it should give its palms for ever to the blessed to salute the glory of God. Pieces of rabbinical lore, curious geographical details, side-lights on familiar incidents, such as the illustration of what Peter's Galilean dialect sounded like to dwellers in the capital, a thousand such details are woven into a tapestry so rich that it seems at times to hide the figure which it seeks to portray.

As might be expected, the material from the Fourth Gospel is woven into the Synoptic narrative, and the historical difficulties thus created are either ignored or evaded.

It is impossible not to regard with respect a work which is the product of so much artistic skill and so much devotion to the divine Person whose human portrait it seeks to present. But it is equally impossible to avoid the conclusion that in this respect 'piety is not enough'. Much of this lush growth must be pruned away if the true outlines of the central figure are to be clearly seen.

Unfortunately something must be said about the translation. It is an ungrateful task to be compelled to find fault, and possibly faulty proof-reading may have to bear some share in the blame. But there are numerous elementary blunders and clumsy expressions which hardly do justice to M. Daniel-Rops' elegance of style. The French *prétendre* does not mean 'to pretend', although it is frequently so translated here. A number of errors seem to be the result of ignorance. The strange word *Aphtardocists* is the absurd form which both the text (p. 261) and the index give for the obscure heretical sect of Aphthartodocetists. Both the text (p. 393) and the index have *Abh-Heth-Din* for the title of the President of the Sanhedrin, which should be Abh-beth-Din. The famous Oxyrhynchus Papyri masquerade as *Oxyrhngue* (p. 23); our old friend Papias appears in both text and index as *Japius,* and Hegesippus as *Hegessipas*! These are only a few of such regrettable blunders, more than twenty of which have been noted in the index. It is to be hoped that in any subsequent editions such blemishes may be removed. Indeed the whole book needs careful revision in respect of the rendering of French forms of proper names into the correct corresponding English forms.

S. H. Hooke

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